

Mary Smith

Infant-baptism

Plainly Proved.

A

DISCOURSE

WHEREIN

Certain select Arguments for INFANT-BAPTISM, formerly syllogistically handled, are now reviewed, abbreviated, and reduced to a plain Method, for the benefit of the Unlearned, and Persons of weaker Capacity.

By JOSEPH WHISTON,

With a large Epistle to the Pious and Learned among the Anti-pædobaptists, especially the Authors of the late Confession of their Faith.

Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, Mat. 23. 29.

Quo imperitior Sermo, hoc illustrior Ratio est. Minutius Felix.

LONDON,

Printed for Jonathan Robinson at the Golden Lion in St. Pauls Church-yard, 1678.

UNION TRADING

Company

DISCOUNT

SALES

OF THE

UNITED STATES

OF AMERICA

AND

THE

WEST INDIES

AND

THE

AFRICA

AND

THE

ASIA

AND

THE



Christian Reader,



He ensuing Sheets are only an Epitome of that Plea I have heretofore more largely managed on the behalf of the Covenant-Interest and Baptism of the Infant-Seed of Believers ; wherein, as thou hast the main Principles I have proceeded upon, so the Strength of those Arguments urged for their establishment, in a Method better suiting ordinary Capacities. The Alterations I have made are only such, as either the Method I have now proceeded in made necessary, or I judged useful for the more full explication of those Principles, and-enforcement of those Arguments, with reference whereunto I have sometimes made considerable Additions ; which I can with much freedom and cheerfulness of Mind put into thine hands, because they now for some years have offered themselves to the severest Test of the most Critical Opposers of the Practice pleaded for, who either have utterly declined their Examination, or after the strictest Examination of them have not been able to produce any just exception against them. And besides they are now reduced to such

a Method, and clothed in such a Dress, as subjects them to thine own Test and Examination; thou mayest (as I may say) see with thine own Eyes. Here are no Majors or Minors to puzzle thy Head withal: but as the Propositions, containing the Principles I have proceeded on, are plainly set down; so their Explications and Proofs are, both in respect of Method and Terms used, accommodated to thine own Understanding. Neither is there any great Strength of Memory required to retain the first Proposition; with the Evidence given in thereunto, till thou comest to the second; nor to retain that or the second, till thou comest to the third: nor any great Acuteness of Understanding, to discern the reference that one Proposition hath to another, nor how the main Conclusion results from them all three, as laid together. Yet this must be said, it cannot be rationally expected, that a Truth perplexed with such variety of Disputes, and entangled with such variety of Objections, as this contended for hath been, should immediately be extricated out of all, and made to appear with that clearness, as that it should command the Understandings of all Men to a submission thereunto, without some Diligence used, and some Prudence exercised, both in examining the Principles laid down, with the Evidence given in for their Confirmation, their subordination and reference the
one

one to the other, and the justness of inferring and concluding the Truth asserted from them all.

The Method, Christian Reader, that I would commend unto thee in examining what is here offered, is the same that I formerly advised to.

I. Thoroughly enquire into, and labour to come to a Resolution about the Covenant-Interest or Federal Holiness of the Infant-Seed of Believers. For though our Brethren of the Antipedobaptist Perswasion seem willing to avoid a Contest about this, and to think that the main Difference between them and us is about their Baptism; yet indeed it is quite otherwise. Would they but (*bonâ fide*) own and assert their Covenant-Interest with us, our Differences would be brought into a much narrower Compass than now they are, neither should we look upon these Contests of such an importance as at present we cannot but do. 'Tis their Covenant-Interest that we mainly contend for; and whosoever shall grant that, I doubt not but they will be easily brought, by the Evidence that is and may be (when necessary) produced from the Scriptures for their Baptism, if not to Compliance with, yet to cease all further Opposition against it. 'Tis then their Covenant-Interest that I would advise thee first to enquire into, and labour to come to a Resolution about; and in order thereunto to search into, and labour to get satisfaction about the Covenant as at first establish'd
with

with Abraham. When the Apostle would establish the Doctrine of Justification by Faith without the Works of the Law, he refers us once and again to the way and manner of Abraham's Justification, (see Rom. 4. begin. Gal. 3. 6.) plainly shewing that God set a Pattern in Abraham, according to which he would ever after proceed in justifying the ungodly, as the Apostle speaks. So in all other things appertaining to the Essence and Substance of the Covenant, he hath set a Pattern in Abraham, according unto which he always hath and will deal with all who are taken into the same Covenant with him. Hence would we be satisfied about the Tenour of the Covenant in regard of its Extent and Latitude, that is, would we know whether it extends to, and takes in Children with their Parents, or be only made with Parents themselves, put that Question to our selves that the Apostle doth Rom. 4. 3. What saith the Scripture? that is, In what tenour doth the Scripture declare that the Covenant was made with Abraham? And we shall evidently find it was made not only personally with Abraham, but with him and his Seed, that is, his Children immediatly proceeding from his own Loins. The evidencing of this is the design of my first Proposition. And having found out the true tenour of the Covenant, as at first established with Abraham, the Father of the Faithful.

Then

Then proceed to enquire how it hath been hitherto, and still is continued to all his Seed, whether of his natural Posterity, or of the Gentiles; and thou wilt evidently find, that as it is the Covenant established with Abraham, that is, the Covenant Believers are still under; so that it always hath been, and still is continued in the same tenour to them all. This my second Proposition, with the Evidence given thereunto proves (pardon me though I say it) against all rational Contradiction. And clearly understanding, and being established in the Truth of these two first Propositions, thou mayest regularly proceed to the examination of the third. Neither do I much doubt thy ready Compliance with that, and consequently the Truth contended for. And the truth is, were but what Mr. Baxter hath said to prove the Church-Membership of the Infant-Seed of Believers, (an Abbreviation of which is now extant) and what is even here offered for the establishing of their Interest in the Conditional Covenant of Grace, from whence their Right to Church-Membership doth arise, and the Arguments to prove the Rightfulness of their Baptism upon supposition of that their Covenant-Interest and Right to Church-Membership, thoroughly and impartially weighed, I cannot but hope this Controversy would hasten to a Period among all that truly fear God.

Christian

Christian Reader, I thought meet to let thee know, that I have had a cursory view of a late Apology for Anti-pedobaptism, put forth by one Mr. Grantham; wherein not finding my self at all concerned, nor any thing added beyond what others have said, I judged it needless to take any further notice of it. I shall only add; Labour to keep a due sence of the weight and importance of this Controversy as yet managed upon thine Heart; keep in mind the Account thou must shortly give to him that is ready to judg the Quick and the Dead; impartially ponder what hath been, and here again is offered for thy satisfaction. Pray much: and as thou mayest assure thy self of a share in his, so let him have a share in thy Prayers, who is sincerely thine in the Service of thy Soul to his power,

J. W.

ERRATA.

P. Ag. 1. l. 10. for *it* read *truth*. Pag. 2. l. 13. for *curiosity* read *curiously*. Pag. 21. l. 16. for *him* read *them*. P. 31. l. 17. for *indifferent* read *indefinite*. P. 36. l. 22. for *know* read *now*. and l. ult. for *Seed* read *House*. P. 38. l. 6. for *nor* read *now*. P. 43. l. 10. add *what*. P. 44. l. 14. blot out *such be*. P. 54. l. ult. for *Covenant* read *Command*. P. 55. l. 27. for *bad* read *back*. P. 71. l. 6. for *personal* read *Parents*. l. 30. blot out *move*. P. 77. l. 7. for *because* read *besides*. P. 80. l. 18. for *that* read *them*. Pag. 82. l. 19. for *to* read *into*. In the Epistle. P. 91. l. 19. blot out *one*. P. 91. l. 29. for *willingly* read *unwittingly*.



CHAP. I.

The Introduction. The first subordinate Proposition proposed, explained, proved by a threefold Consideration.

Solomon tells us, *The Scorners seeketh Wisdom, but findeth it not; but to him that understandeth, Knowledge is easy*, Prov. 14. 6. Or as some read the latter Branch, *To him that is prudent, Knowledge is light*. In which Proverb we have a twofold Qualification, necessary for Inquirers after Truth, viz. *Humility and Prudence*; the former to their Enjoyment of Divine Assistance and Teachings, the latter to the right management of the Enquiries made: through the concurrence of both which, their Enquiries will become both easy and successful. The Usefulness of the latter, only to touch upon that, the same wise Man sufficiently implies in another of his sacred Adagies, where he tells us, *The Heart of the Prudent getteth* (or as some read) *possesseth Knowledge*, Prov. 13. 15. Others may seek after it, but it is the Prudent that is enriched with the Knowledge of it.

Not to insist upon the various Respects in which Prudence is necessary, and ought to be exercised in Enquiries made after Truth, so as that the Mind may come to be enriched with the Knowledge of it, I shall only say, That he that is furnished with, and hath the Use and Exercise of so much Prudence, as thereby to be directed in a right Entrance upon his

B

search;

search, will find himself under no small advantage, more regularly and delightfully to proceed in, and at last arrive at the desired Success of the Search he makes; and no where can the Entrance upon the Search after any Truth be made more rightfully, or with more hope of Success, than at the first; at least more plain and express Revelations that God hath made thereof unto his Church. *The entrance of thy Word, saith the Psalmist, giveth Light, Psal. 119. 30. Or, the Door of thy Word.* So the Seventy usually translate that word. Suppose a large Fabrick or Building, furnished with variety of Rooms and Appartments, the whole Curiosity framed after the manner of a Labyrinth, each Room having a Clew of Silk or Thread leading thereunto, all meeting together at the Door; now as the opening the Door lets in Light, whereby a more general View and Prospect of the whole may be taken, so the several Clews leading to their respective Rooms or Appartments discerned; and let a Man take hold of the right Clew, and keep his hold of that, it leads him safely through all the Windings and Turnings, to the Room he intends to take up his residence in; otherwise he is bewildred, and loseth himself. To such a Fabrick or Building we may compare the whole Systeme of Divine Doctrine contained in the Scriptures, and some such Allusion the Psalmist seems to have had in his Eye. Thus, as by the first supernatural Revelations of Divine Truth, the Door to this glorious Fabrick was opened; so they contain some (though more dark and obscure) Notices and Discoveries of all the main and fundamental Doctrines of, or appertaining to the Covenant of Grace; which if a Man's Under-

Understanding take hold of, and he follow according as further Light is gradually vouchsafed, they will be as a Clew whereby he shall be safely led to a clear Sight and Understanding of that Doctrine he is enquiring after, so as comfortably to act his Faith, and suit his Practice thereunto.

As for Instance, Take it of that Divine Oracle given out to Adam, concerning the Seed of the Woman breaking the Serpents Head, and the Serpents bruising his Heel. As by the giving out of this Divine Oracle the Door was first opened; so there is in it a general Comprehension of the Sum and Substance of all the Doctrines contained in, and communicated to us by the Scriptures, appertaining to the Essence and Substance of the Covenant of Grace, and answerably it would be of no small advantage unto Men in order to their clear understanding of, and establishment in many, if not most Doctrines appertaining to the Covenant of Grace, to make a thorow Enquiry into, and get a clear Knowledge of the full Mind of God in that Divine Oracle. This might easily be made to appear in sundry Instances; but to wave all others, let me only instance in that Doctrine I have been, and still am pleading for, viz. *Concerning the Covenant-Interest and Baptism of the Infant-Seed of Believers.*

That God in this Oracle did not altogether obscurely incarnate his Will concerning the Infant-Seed of his People, hath been shewed by another Hand. And should I have begun my Enquiries here, it had neither been impertinent nor unprofitable: but because the Light held forth in this first Oracle for the discovery of the Mind and Will of God about the Doctrine pleaded for, is (as must

be granted) but dim and obscure, and consequently hardly discernable by ordinary Capacities, I have rather chosen to enter upon my Enquiries at the Establishment of the Covenant with *Abraham*, an Account whereof we have in *Gen. 17. 7.* And I have the rather entered upon my Enquiries here, because the Covenant was then entered with *Abraham*, not only as personally considered, but as the Father of all the Faithful that should succeed in all after Ages, and that for an everlasting Covenant, to endure invariable as to the Essence and Substance of it throughout all Generations, so long as *Abraham* should have a Seed upon the Earth. And entering upon our Enquiries here, we shall immediately discern such evident Notices of the Mind and Will of God concerning the Infant-Seed of his People, as upon which our Understandings taking hold, and we being guided by the further Manifestations, that God from time to time, till the *sealing up of the Vision*, as *Daniel* speaks, hath made of his Mind and Will concerning them, we shall, as by a safe Clew, be led to such a clear Insight into, and Understanding of the Agreableness of that Practice we inquire after, to the Mind and Will of God, as we may comfortably acquiesce and proceed on therein.

For the clearing up of which, let a threefold Proposition, with that Evidence the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament give unto each of them, be carefully attended to.

Prop. I.

Prop. I.

That when God at the first Establishment of his Covenant with Abraham, promised to be a God to him, and to his Seed in their Generations, he in that Term [Seed] intended his natural Children, immediately proceeding from his own Loins.

Prop. II.

That this grand Promise of the Covenant is continued to New-Testament Believers, in the same Extent and Latitude in which it was at first given to Abraham.

Prop. III.

That all those that are under, or are the actual Subjects of that grand Promise of the Covenant, are the due Subjects of Baptism.

Supposing the Truth of these three Propositions, none can with the least shew of Reason question the Agreeableness of that Practice of Infants Baptism (the Practice enquired after, and by us contended for) to the Mind and Will of our Lord Christ. To begin with the first, *Viz.*

Prop. I.

When God at the first Establishment of his Covenant with Abraham, promised to be a God to him, and to his Seed in their Generations; by that Term [Seed] firstly and immediately intended his natural Children, and that as immediately proceeding from his own Loins.

For the right understanding of this Proposition, and preventing all Mistakes about it, I readily grant, yea positively affirm, that together with his natural Children, his Spiritual Seed, viz. true Believers, whether living under the Old or New-Testament-Administration, were included, and as taken of his natural Seed. I do not say, that his Children immediately proceeding from his own Loins were only, but this I say, they were firstly and immediately intended. I readily grant, the Promise had a respect unto, and did include all the natural Jews, yea, even those yet in being. Yet this must be carefully observed, That though in this Term [Seed] God intended and had respect to all Abraham's natural Posterity, as well as his Children immediately proceeding from his own Loins; yet he did not intend, nor had respect to both as falling under one and the same Notion and Consideration. As for his Children immediately proceeding from his own Loins, he intended and had respect to them, as severally and particularly considered; that is, he intended and had respect to each of them in particular;

ticular, as *Ismael* and his Children by *Hagar*, as well as *Isaac*; but as for his Posterity, mediately proceeding from him, as all the *Jews* in following Ages, God intended and had respect to them in this Promise only as more generally considered; that is, he intended and had respect to them only in general, as *Abraham's* Posterity, but he intended them not, nor had respect to them as severally and particularly considered. Hence no one of *Abraham's* Posterity, beyond those that did immediately proceed from his own Loins, had this Promise appertaining to them, as singularly or particularly considered merely as of his natural Seed; but whosoever among them were in Covenant, or had the Promise appertaining to them, they were either such as had personally taken hold of the Covenant themselves, or were the natural Children of those who had so done. So that for the understanding the full Mind of God in that grand Promise, we must distinguish of this Term [Seed], or of this Seed of *Abraham*, to whom the Promise was made, as thus; *Abraham's* Seed is either Natural, or Spiritual. Again, take it of his Natural Seed, so they were either such as proceeded immediately from his own Loins, or such as proceeded from those who originally descended from him, and were on that account to be reckoned as of his Posterity. Now take the Promise as respecting both *Abraham's* natural Seed immediately proceeding from his own Loins, and also his Spiritual Seed; so it was intended of, and had respect to each of them in particular: But take it as respecting his natural Seed, mediately descending from him in after Ages; so it intended and had respect to them only in the general,

ral, but did not intend, nor had respect to any taken apart and singly by themselves. As for Instance, take the Promise as respecting *Abraham's* immediate Children; so it intended and had respect to *Ishmael* as well as *Isaac*, and to each of his Children by *Keturah* as well as either *Ishmael* or *Isaac*; but take it as respecting his Posterity in after Ages, suppose *Jacob*, or any of his Children in Ages at a greater distance from him, suppose *Moses*, *David*, or the like; so it did not intend them in particular, only had a more general respect unto them, as of *Abraham's* Posterity, but had no other respect to them than it had to any other of his Posterity, that were or are alike descended from him with them. But now this, I say, however this Term [*Seed*] is to be understood, yet *Abraham's* natural Seed, or Children immediatly proceeding from his own Loins, were firstly intended, as the immediate and next Subjects of the Promise with *Abraham* himself. Yet further for the fuller clearing up the Mind of God in this Promise, and that our Foundation to the main conclusion may be more firmly laid, Two things must be carefully observed and remembered.

1. That as this promise had a respect to *Abraham's* whole Seed, according as is before opened, so it was made to them in their respective Generations, that is, to them and their Seed, that is, their natural Children immediatly proceeding from their own Loins.

2. That as it respected all *Abraham's* natural Seed immediatly proceeding from his own Loins, and his Spiritual Seed, with their respective Children immediatly proceeding from their own Loins, as severally

rally and particularly considered; so it was made only conditionally: it did not secure the Good contained in it absolutely, let them live how they would; but it did suppose, and indispensibly require, That as the natural Children of *Abraham*, so the natural Children of all his Seed, as grown up to years of Maturity, should personally take hold of the Covenant themselves, and perform the Conditions of it in their own Persons; so that his Spiritual Seed should continue in that way of Faith and Holiness they were entered into, in order to their respective enjoyment of the Good promised.

But to come to the Proof of this first Proposition, *That Abraham's natural Seed, immediately proceeding from his own Loins, were intended in this Promise as the first and next Subjects of it*, is so evident, that it seems impossible that any pretending Sobriety should deny it. For,

I. 'Tis undeniable from the very Letter of the Promise, *I will, saith God, be a God to thee, and to thy Seed.* Now this Term [Seed] in the first and most proper Signification of it, must needs intend his natural Children. And had not the Holy-Ghost himself shewed us, that *Abraham* was to be the Father of a Spiritual Seed, and that this Seed was included with his natural, all Men must have rationally understood it of his natural Seed only, and it had been the highest presumption to have applied it to any other. And though the Holy-Ghost hath shewed us, that *Abraham* was to have a Spiritual Seed, and that that Seed was intended; yet for any to exclude his natural Seed, when they have no warrant from Scripture so to do, favours of no small Presumption. It is a known Rule
for

for the Interpretation of Scripture, that when a Word that admits of various Interpretations, and is applicable to various things, is put absolutely, it must at least firstly and primarily be understood according to its most proper Intent and Signification. Hence for any to understand this Term [*Seed*] in this Promise of *Abraham's* Spiritual Seed, to the excluding of his Natural Seed, when they have no warrant from Scripture so to do, is unreasonable and absurd. And as it must most properly signify his natural Seed, so it cannot without the greatest affront to common Speech, and all Rules of Interpretation, be understood of his Posterity in after Ages, to the excluding of his natural Children immediatly proceeding from his own Loins. So that as for any to have understood this Promise of *Abraham's* Spiritual Seed, had not the Scripture warranted them so to do, had been Presumption: So to understand it of them to the excluding his natural Seed, when there is no warrant so to do, is unreasonable: And to understand it of his remote Posterity, to the excluding his Children descended immediatly from his own Loins, is alike presumptuous, unreasonable, and absurd, with either of the former. And hence, would but the contrary-minded keep to the Letter of Scripture, which sometimes they stand so much upon, a good Foundation would be laid for the ending of this Controversy.

2. That *Abraham's* natural Children were firstly and immediatly intended in this Promise by this Term [*Seed*], is evident from *Abraham's* application of the Token of the Covenant (wherein this Promise is one special Article on God's part) and that

that under that very Notion, *viz.* as the *Token of the Covenant to them.* And this also according to the express Will and Appointment of God Himself, that God did appoint *Abraham* to apply the *Token of the Covenant*, and that under that very Notion and Consideration, as the *Token of the Covenant*, to his natural Children immediately proceeding from his own Loins, and that to all of them, without any limitation or exception of the one or the other, is in so many words expressly declared, in that *Gen. 17. 9, 10, 11.* In *ver. 9.* the Command is given in more general Terms, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant;* and what he intended by *Covenant* in this 9th verse, he explains in the 10th, *viz.* the *Token of the Covenant*, which under the First-Testament Administration is expressly declared to be *Circumcision*; *Every Man-child among you shall be circumcised.* And that God appointed and enjoined it under this Notion, as the *Token of the Covenant*, is evident, in that God tells them expressly, it should be the *Token of the Covenant between him and them.* And that *Abraham* did apply this *Token of the Covenant* to all his natural Seed, immediately proceeding from his own Loins, and that as the *Token of the Covenant*, is undoubted; 'tis expressly declared both of *Ishmael* and *Isaac*, *Gen. 17. 13,* --- *21. Gen. 4. 8.* Though the *Circumcision* of his Children by *Keturah* is not mentioned, yet that they were circumcised cannot be questioned; seeing the *Circumcision* of some others, as of *Jacob* and his Sons, who yet past all doubt were circumcised, is not mentioned. The Command of God to circumcise them, (considering the Testimony that God Himself gives of *Abraham's* Faithfulness) as also his circumcising his

Servants

Servants, (who were more remote from him than his own Children) sufficiently assure us that they were circumcised, though their Circumcision be not mentioned in the Story. And to suppose that he should apply the Token of the Covenant under any other Notion than as the Token of it, seeing under that Notion it was commanded, would be unreasonable and absurd. Now *Abraham's* applying the Token of the Covenant, wherein this Promise was a special Article on God's part, and under that very Notion, puts it past all scruple, that by [*Seed*] in the Promise, his natural Seed, and that as immediately proceeding from his own Loins, were intended; otherwise the Token of the Covenant, and that under that very Notion as the Token of it, would, and that according to the appointment of God Himself, have been applied to some utterly uninterested in the Covenant, which is most unreasonable to imagine; yea, then God should have spoken that which had been utterly false, to say of Circumcision, it is the *Token of my Covenant between me and you*, in case any to whom it was applied had not been in Covenant, (which in case this Promise took them not in, they had not been) had been utterly false: so that to imagine God should appoint *Abraham* to apply the Token of the Covenant, and that as the Token of it, to any uninterested in it, would be to imagine him not only guilty of Irrationality, but Falshood. Hence nothing can be more evident, than that they were *Abraham's* natural Seed, immediately proceeding from his own Loins, that were firstly and immediately intended in that Promise.

3. This might be further evidenced, were it at all necessa-

necessary, by instancing in such of *Abraham's* natural Children, as upon supposition of whose being intended in this Promise, it will undeniably follow, that all his immediate Children were intended in it. And proving that they were indeed intended, thus we might instance in *Isaac* and *Ishmael*; that they two were intended in this Promise, is evident from Scripture. As for *Isaac*, that of *Gen. 21. 12.* expounded by the Apostle, *Rom. 9. 7, 8.* fully declares it; hence he is said to be an *Heir* with *Abraham*, having respect to this very Promise, *Heb. 11. 9.* And as for *Ishmael*, the Apostle puts it out of doubt, that he was intended in this Promise, when he tells us, that upon his persecuting *Isaac* he was cast out, *Gal. 4.* latter end. Now he could not have been cast out of Covenant, had he not been before in it; and that he was not only cast out of *Abraham's* Family, but together therewith out of Covenant, is evident, as other ways, so from *Abraham's* grief for the same.

Now if those two were intended in the Promise, it will undeniably follow, that all *Abraham's* natural Children were alike intended in it. We see the Promise is made in universal Terms, not excepting any of his Seed in particular. And these two being evidently intended, there is no reason imaginable why any of his other Children should be excluded.

From the whole of what hath been said, the Truth of this first Proposition appears past all rational Contradiction. Whence supposing this Covenant mentioned, *Gen. 17. 7.* be the Covenant of Grace under which Believers now are; and

and that this Promise respecting the Seed, be of the Essence and Substance of the Covenant, of both which more hereafter. We have gained thus much, *viz.* That at the first Establishment of it, the first Person, *viz.* *Abraham*, with whom it was established, and that as the Father of all that should have after admission into it, had his natural Seed or Children proceeding from his own Loins taken into the Covenant with himself; which how fair a Foundation it lays to our general Conclusion, is plain to all of a competent understanding. And the Evidence given in to this first Proposition being so full and clear, and the Objections made against it being so inconsiderable; or if any thing may seem to have any weight in it, it will be met with afterward, I shall not interrupt the Order with the recital of them; if any Scruple arise in the Minds of any, they may find Satisfaction in my first Book, *chap.* 3. But to proceed to the second Proposition.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The second subordinate Proposition propounded, briefly explained, confirmed, First, from the express Letter of that Promise, Gen. 17. 7. The true Sence of that Promise stated, and confirmed by a threefold Consideration. Secondly, by several Promises and Prophecies, relating to New-Testament Times.

Prop. II.

That this grand Promise of the Covenant is continued to New-Testament-Believers in the same Extent and Latitude in which it was at first given to Abraham. Or take it thus, This Promise always hath been, and still is continued to all Abraham's Seed, in the same Extent and Latitude, in which it was at first given to Abraham their Father.

Look in what Sence it is to be understood as made to *Abraham*, in the same Sence it is to be understood as continued to his Seed, or to those whoever they were or are, that were or are intended in this Term [*Seed*], and consequently to New-Testament-Believers, they being undoubtedly intended in it. Plainly thus, as God in this Promise, as at first made to *Abraham*, had a particular respect to all his Children, immediatly pro-

proceeding from his own Loins, and only a more general respect to all his Posterity, mediately descending from him; and answerably each of his Children immediatly proceeding from him, had an actual Interest in the Promise, were in the Covenant, and had a right to the Sign and Token of it; whereas the rest of his Posterity, though God had a more general respect to them, yet none of them had an actual Right to the Promise, neither were they in Covenant as particularly considered, nor could have the Token of the Covenant duly applied unto them: So now in this Promise, as continued to *Abraham's* Seed, whether of the *Jews* or *Gentiles*, God always had, and still hath a particular respect to all their Children immediatly proceeding from their own Loins, and answerably each one of them in particular are under the Promise, within the Covenant, and have a right to the Token of it; but as for their mediate Posterity, tho God always had and still hath a more general respect to them; yet none of them have an actual Interest in the Promise, neither can they rightfully have the Token of it applied unto them.

And if it be said, In case God had only a more general respect to *Abraham's* Posterity, mediately descended from him, by virtue of which respect none of them were actually in Covenant, nor had a right to the Sign and Token; how came it to pass that the Covenant was continued for so many Generations amongst the *Jews*, and they had this Promise of God's being a God to them continued successively from one Generation to another unto them?

I answer, to touch upon this by the way, it was thus: First God enters the Covenant with *Abraham*,
and

and therein promises not only to be a God to him in his own Person, but to be a God to his Seed, that is, as before proved, his natural Children, immediatly proceeding from his own Loins. These Children, as in their Infancy, were under the Promise, as they were naturally descended from him, and they growing up to years of Maturity, so many of them as took hold of the Covenant had now the Promise continued to them in the same extent and latitude it was given to *Abraham*, it is now to them, and their Children immediatly proceeding from their own Loins. These Children again, during their Infant-state were under the Promise, as descending from such believing Parents; and they again growing up to years of Maturity, so many of them as took hold of the Covenant had the Promise continued to them, in the same extent in which it was given to *Abraham*, and their immediate Parents, had it continued to them, and so from one Generation to another. But in case any of *Abraham's* immediate Children, as in the Case of *Ishmael*, or of such Parents as had taken hold of the Covenant, as in the Case of *Esau*, did apostatize from God, they did thereby not only forfeit their own Interest in the Promise, but did cut off the Entail from their Posterity: themselves having lost the Promise, or forfeited their Interest in it; their Children must needs lose their Interest with them, and answerably they were to be cast out of the Church, look'd upon and dealt with as *Strangers to the Covenant*, and Promises of it, till themselves should personally repent and believe: and in some cases were to be cut off by Death, and if they were not, it was the fault of those in whose hands

the Administration of Church-Censures was put. But so long as *Abraham's* Posterity did successively, one Generation after another, embrace the Covenant; so long the Promise was continued to them in the same extent and latitude in which it was at first given to *Abraham*. And as it was thus in respect of the *Jews*, or natural Posterity of *Abraham*, so it is in respect of the *Gentiles*. Whoever under the first Testament was, or under the New-Testament is to be accounted for *Abraham's* Seed, they always had and have the Promise continued to them in the same extent, and yet with the same limitations, in and with which it was given to *Abraham*; though it is true, *Abraham* in several respects had a preeminence above any of his Seed, as in respect of Paternity or Father-hood, so in respect of the Continuance of the Covenant amongst his natural Posterity; but this I say, Take *Abraham* as a believing Parent of natural Children, so as the Promise was made at first to him, and his natural Children immediatly proceeding from his own Loins, so it always hath been and still is continued to all that were or are to be accounted for his Seed. And the Truth of this Proposition is alike evident from Scripture with the Truth of the former. As,

I. It is evident from the very Letter of the Promise, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy Seed, in their Generations.*

God, we see, promises not only to be a God to *Abraham's* Seed, but to be a God to them in their *Generations*. Now in this Phrase, [*their Generations*] their Children are included. [*Thy Seed in their Gene-*

rations] in this latter Branch of the Promise, is equivalent to [*thee and thy Seed*] in the former Branch of it, as that was made to *Abraham* as a natural Father of natural Children; for God to promise to be a God to *Abraham's Seed in their Generations*, is all one as if he had, (as before he did to *Abraham*) promised to be a God to them and their natural Children: So that in this Phrase, *in their Generations*, is included the natural Children of all those to whom the Promise doth appertain.

For the clearing up of this it must be premised, That in the same Sence this Branch of the Promise is to be interpreted, as it had respect and was continued to the Jews, who were *Abraham's* natural Posterity; in the same Sence it is to be interpreted as it had respect, has been, or is continued to those who from among the Gentiles were or are to be accounted the Seed intended in this Promise. And the Reason is evident, because the Jews, his natural Seed, as grown up to years of maturity, held their Interest in the Promise, not meerly as his natural, but as his Spiritual Seed, as is partly evident from what is already said, and will more abundantly appear from what follows. Hence undeniably, as, this Phrase in this Promise was to be interpreted, as it respected the natural Posterity of *Abraham*, so it is to be understood as respecting the *Gentiles*.

Now that this was the Sence of this Promise, as it respected *Abraham's* natural Seed and Posterity, is evident three ways.

First, Because it can be no otherwise understood, but the Truth and Faithfulness of God will be impeached thereby. Let any other Sence imaginable be put upon this Branch of the Promise, and it

will be found inconsistent with the Truth and Faithfulness of God in his Promises: for there is no other Sence, besides that afore mentioned, can with any shew of reason be put upon it, except only this, *viz.* That when God promised to be a God to *Abraham*, and his *Seed in their Generations*, his meaning was, That he would be a God to them in the several Ages and Generations of the World, wherein they should respectively live. But now this Sence is utterly inconsistent with the Truth and Faithfulness of God, in as much as in case this had been the sence and meaning of this Branch of the Promise, then each one of *Abraham's* natural Posterity would have had particular Interest in it, and consequently God had engaged Himself to be a God to each of them: for in case this Phrase [*thy Seed in their Generations*] extends not the Promise beyond those immediatly and firstly intended in that Term [*Seed*], then the Promise, to whomsoever it should appertain, would have been a particular Promise, entitling each of them to the Good promised. That it is to be understood as a particular Promise, as appertaining both to *Abraham's* natural Children, immediatly proceeding from his own Loins, and to his Spiritual Seed, entitling each of them to the Good promised, is past all rational doubt, and will be further proved hereafter: and answerably, in case that Phrase, *in their Generations*, should not extend the Promise beyond those firstly and immediatly intended in that Term (*Seed*), it must be so understood as appertaining to all *Abraham's* Posterity; for that it did and doth in some sence appertain to them, is expressly declared in Scripture. But now
it

it is undeniable, that God was not the God of *Abraham's Seed in their Generations* in this Sence; there were many of *Abraham's Seed* in after Generations that God was not a God unto: So that let Men study to the utmost, they will never be able to find out any other Sence of this Promise, than that I have before given, as it respected *Abraham's natural Posterity*, but it will be found inconsistent with the Truth and Faithfulness of God in his Promises.

Secondly, That this is the true sence and meaning of this Branch of the Promise, is evident, because God himself so expounds it, when he comes afterward to deal with the *Jews* in a Covenant-way; thus *Deut.* 29. 10, 11, 12, 13. There we shall find, when God comes to renew his Covenant with him, he takes in their *natural Children* with themselves, as Parents, into Covenant with Himself, and that in prosecution of this very Promise. In the 11th vers. it is expressly said, *The Covenant was entered with their little Ones*. And that this was in prosecution of this Promise is expressly affirmed, v. 13. And that he did not take them in meerly as they were of *Abraham's Posterity*, is in part evident, and will further appear in the next particular. So that God himself expounds this Phrase, *in their Generations*, as including Parents and Children.

Thirdly, That this is the sence and meaning of this Branch of that Promise, is evident *de facto*. *Abraham's* natural Posterity, so long as the Covenant was continued among them, yea, not only his natural Posterity, but also such who from among the Gentiles took hold of the Covenant, enjoyed the Promise as including their Children with them, Parents

and Children were always Joint-Heirs of the same Promise; what Parents soever, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, had the Promise appertaining to them, their Children had it alike appertaining to them. Now this is evident past all rational doubt these three ways.

First, From the constant application of the Token of the Covenant, and that according to the appointment of God himself, to their Children, that both the *Jews*, and those who from among the *Gentiles* joined themselves to the *Jewish* Church, were according to the appointment of God to, and answerably did, apply the Token of the Covenant to their Children, is sufficiently evident throughout the Old-Testament, and is denied by none.

2dly. This is evident from the Ground upon which the Token was applied to them, and that was their Interest in the Promise. And that the Token of the Covenant was applied upon that Ground, is sufficiently evident from what hath been already said. For,

1. It was applied under that very Notion and Consideration, viz. as the *Token of the Covenant*.

2. The Application and Reception of it is said to be the keeping of the Covenant.

3. The Command enjoining of it was grounded upon Interest in the Covenant.

4. Otherwise God could not truly say, it was the Token of the Covenant between him and those to whom it was applied, which yet he doth.

5. Because otherwise it had been the universal Duty of all *Abraham's* Posterity, descended as well by *Ishmael* as *Isaac*, and by *Esau* as *Jacob*, to con-

tinue

tinue the use of Circumcision throughout all Ages, though rejected of God from being his People, which is absurd to imagine.

3dly. Let this be added, that the Promise could not appertain to the Children we now speak of, neither could they have been in Covenant, unless included in this Phrase, *Thy Seed in their Generations*. That they had an Interest in that Promise, and were in Covenant, is undeniable from what hath been already said. Now I say, they could have had no Interest in that Promise, neither could have been in Covenant, had they not been included in that Phrase: For,

1. It cannot be supposed, neither will any affirm, they could have that Promise appertaining to them by virtue of any personal Act of their own: by what way, or through what means then can they be supposed to have had such an Interest in the Promise, but only this, that it did reach and take in Children with their Parents? If any shall say, it was by virtue of their Relation to *Abraham*, as his Seed, though mediately descending from him. To that I answer. That there is no Ground for this pretence, in respect of the Children of those who from among the Gentiles embraced *Abraham's* Covenant, they were not either immediately or mediately descended from *Abraham*; hence in respect of the Children of Proselytes, there is no other way imaginable how they should come to an Interest in the Promise, and without that they could not have had the Token of the Covenant applied to them, which undeniably they had, but that before mentioned, *viz.* through the extent of the Promise as made to Parents and Children, in this Phrase, *Thy*

Seed in their Generations. And as for the Children of those who were of the natural Posterity of *Abraham*, neither could they have the Promise appertaining to them, as descended from him, and that is undeniable from hence, because their Parents, as grown up to years of maturity, and as Parents they must be granted so to be, they had not the Promise continued to themselves merely as of the natural Posterity of *Abraham*, but as having personally taken hold of the Covenant themselves, and so as Believers, and consequently as *Abraham's* Mystical Seed. The truth is, that none of *Abraham's* natural Seed, whether grown up to years of Maturity, or Infants, beyond those immediately proceeding from his own Loins, as *Ismael*, *Isaac*, &c. and they too only during their Infant-state, had an actual and personal Interest in, or Right to the Covenant, or Promises of it, merely as his Seed, or as of his natural Race and Posterity. This is evident: for,

1. If any had an Interest in the Promise merely as of *Abraham's* natural Posterity, then all his Posterity would have had a like interest In it: but it is infallibly certain that all had not.

2. In case *Abraham's* natural Posterity had had an Interest in the Covenant and Promises, merely as such, beyond his immediate Children, then Breach of Covenant on their part had been simply and absolutely impossible, and consequently they must necessarily have continued in Covenant till the Covenant it self had been repealed, (which to this day is not, as will appear more fully by and by) and have enjoyed the full Good promised.

But now to say that Breach of Covenant on
their

their part was impossible, is not only to contradict plain Scripture, but to charge God with the greatest Unfaithfulness and Injustice. How came so many of *Abraham's* Posterity to be cast out of Covenant, if Breach of Covenant had been impossible on their part? Or if they are not cast out of Covenant, how comes it to pass that they enjoy not the Benefits of it? But that the Covenant is broken on their parts, is undeniable; which had it appertained to them merely as *Abraham's* Posterity, had been impossible, for *Abraham's* Posterity they still are.

3. In case all *Abraham's* natural Race and Posterity had the Covenant with the Promises of it appertaining to them, merely as his Seed; and if any as such had, then all had, as is proved before; then none of them could have been justly or righteously finally cut off, cast out, or excluded from, either the Covenant, or Common-wealth of *Israel*, either by the hand of God, or by any Ecclesiastical Censure. But that some, yea, or any of them, supposing their Apostacy from God, might be justly and righteously cut off, cast out, and excluded, and that finally, from the Covenant, and Common-wealth of *Israel*, either the one or the other way, is certain. So that none of *Abraham's* Posterity, beyond his immediate Children, had an actual personal Interest in the Covenant, or had the Promises appertaining to them, merely as or because they were of his Posterity. And hence it will undeniably follow, that all those of his Posterity, that being grown up to years of Maturity, had their Interest in the Covenant continued to them, it was not merely because they were of *Abraham's*

*h*is Posterity, but because themselves had personally taken hold of the Covenant, and so were become his Mystical as well as his Natural Seed; and all their Children had their Interest in the Covenant, not from their Relation to *Abraham*, as of his natural Posterity, but from their Relation to their immediate Parents, by virtue of this Promise made to *Abraham's* Seed in their Generations.

Now then let but what hath been said be well weighed, and fully understood, and no rational Scruple can remain in the Minds of any about the Truth of what we affirm. That which we affirm, is this, That the Covenant, and in particular this Promise of God's being a God to *Abraham*, and his natural Seed immediatly proceeding from his own Loins, was continued to his Seed, whether they were *Jews*, or Profelyted Gentiles under the first Testament, in the same latitude and extent in which it was established with, and made to *Abraham* at the first.

We see it is evident, First, from the very Letter of the Promise. And that that is the true meaning of that Promise is evident, because no other Sence can be put upon it, but the Truth and Faithfulness of God is impeached thereby, God himself so expounds it, and the *Jews* so enjoyed it throughout all Ages.

And in the same extent and latitude in which the Covenant and Promises were continued to *Abraham's* Seed under the first Testament, in the same extent and Latitude they are continued to his Seed under the second Testament, which evidently appears, not only from hence, namely, Because the Promise equally and alike concerns New-Testament

ment-Believers, as *Abraham's* Seed under the first Testament, and no Alteration appears to have been made in the tenour of the Covenant, in regard of its latitude and extent. Which alone might suffice, seeing it must needs be high Presumption for any to make any Alteration in the Covenant beyond what God hath done. But I say it appears not only from hence, but also from the Consideration of the Notion under which those that then had the Promise appertaining to them and their Children were look'd upon, viz. as *Abraham's* Mystical or Spiritual Seed, which is the very same Notion under which Believers still are look'd upon, as having the Promise appertaining unto them.

Now when the People of God under the first Testament had the Promise continued to them in this extent and latitude, viz. as reaching to and taking in their Children with them, and this as they were considered under this very Notion, as *Abraham's* Mystical or Spiritual Seed. Who can entertain the least doubt, whether it be continued in the same extent and latitude to the People of God under the second Testament, seeing both those under the first Testament, and these under the second Testament are alike included in, and spoken to in one and the same Promise, and that as look'd upon in the Promise under the self-same Notion and Consideration?

These things carry so much Evidence, that were they well considered, it may seem even impossible, but that this Controversy, among all Persons that give themselves up to the Conduct of the Scriptures, must needs have a Period put unto it, and indeed it may seem utterly
super-

superfluous to add any thing more, and therefore I shall more contract in what remains.

But to proceed, the Truth of this second Proposition is evident.

II. From the Promises and Prophecies of the Old-Testament, referring to New-Testament times.

They evidently shew, that God intended this Promise should be continued to *Abraham's Seed*, that is, *Believers under the New-Testament*, in the same extent and latitude in which it was made to *Abraham* at first, viz. as taking in Parents and their Children. Thus it is evidently prophesied of, and promised to some, as in particular the *Jews*, that under the New-Testament they should enjoy this Promise in the same extent and latitude in which it was made to *Abraham*, that is, That God would be a God to them and their Children with them. The Prophecies and Promises are obvious to all, that will but consult these Scriptures; *Isa. 44. 3. & 59. 21. & 65. 23. Jerem. 31. 1. Ezek. 47. 21, 22.* Who, that reads these Scriptures, especially as expounded by the Apostle *Paul* in *Rom. 11. 26.* by that universal Phrase, *All Israel shall be saved*, can doubt whether the *Jews* at their future Call and Conversion shall enjoy this Promise in the extent and latitude before mentioned? Surely all Men must unavoidably grant that they shall, neither do I know that any have expressly denied it. Now it is certain they shall be received into the same Covenant that Believers are now under, they shall not have

have another Covenant distinct from that at present made with Believers. This is evident by comparing *Jer.* 31. 31. with *Heb.* 8. 8. Now the Covenant being one and the same, all the Promises of it may and ought to be indifferently applied unto all under it, and consequently to believing Gentiles, as well as to the *Jews* at that their Call and Conversion; I mean, they may and ought to be applied indifferently both to believing Gentiles, and to the *Jews*, when the Good contained in them is not, either by the nature or kind of it, nor by any revelation from God, restrained to the *Jews*, as the Good of this Promise is not. And that we may and ought to apply such Promises, though firstly and directly made to the *Jews*, to believing Gentiles, is sufficiently evident from the Apostles application of Promises to believing *Gentiles*, which were firstly and immediately made to the *Jews*. Compare *Jerem.* 31. 31. with *Heb.* 8. 8, 9, 10. *Amos* 9. 12. with *Acts* 15. 16. These Promises primarily and principally respect the *Jews* at their future Conversion; yet, we see, the Apostle applies them to the Gospel-Church under this present Administration. In like manner are those other Promises, concerning God's *pouring out his Spirit and Blessing upon the Offspring of his People, his being a God of all the Families of Israel.* And the like may and ought to be applied to believing *Gentiles*, though they have a most direct respect to the *Jews*.

So that it is evident from these Prophecies and Promises, that God intended to continue, and answerably has continued this Promise in the same extent

extent in which it was made to *Abraham*, to believing Gentiles. The Promise is still to them and their Seed, that is, their natural Children, as it was to *Abraham*, and his natural Children.

CHAP. III.

The second subordinate Proposition further confirmed, and that both from the express Words of the Apostle, Gal. 3. 14. And from several New-Testament-Scriptures, as laid together, and compared one with another. Three Conclusions drawn from them. Two Inferences drawn from those Conclusions. Three Objections answered.

That this Promise is settled upon, and confirmed to believing Gentiles, in that extent and latitude mentioned, is evident,

III. From the express Letter of the New-Testament.

Thus in *Gal. 3. 13, 14.* the Apostle tells us expressly, That Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, himself being made a Curse for us, that the Blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles through him. So that it is according to the express Letter of this Scripture, that the Blessing of Abraham is come upon the believing Gentiles through

Christ. Hence the only Question is, what this Blessing is? Now this the Apostle sufficiently declares in the 9th verse of this Chap. where he tells us, that they that are of the Faith, that is, true Believers, *they are blessed with faithful Abraham*, that is, they are blessed with the same Blessing that he was blessed with: Now this was the Blessing he was blessed with, *viz.* that God was his God, and the God of his Seed; that is, as before proved, his natural Seed. It is true, there were other Blessings conferred upon *Abraham*; but that the Blessing contained in that grand Promise of the Covenant is this very Blessing the Apostle hath respect unto, and doth intend, is undeniable, for these three Reasons.

1. Because the Apostle expresseth himself in an indifferent or universal Term, *the Blessing*, and consequently the Blessing contained in this Promise, cannot be excluded, whatever other Blessings are included.

2. Because all other Blessings conferred upon *Abraham* were such, as each believing Gentile is incapable of enjoying, as to be *the Father of the Faithful*, to have the *Messiah* descend from their Loins. These and the like Blessings are not compatible to every particular Believer; so that no other Blessing that *Abraham* was blessed with, can be intended.

3. Especially because the Apostle must necessarily have respect to this very Promise, and therefore the Blessing contained in it must needs be the Blessing said by him to be come upon the believing *Gentiles* through Christ. This is evident from the 16th verse of this Chap. where the Apostle cites this very Promise, to prove what he had affirmed

in

this 14th verse, concerning the Blessing of *Abraham*, its being come upon the *Gentiles* through *Christ*. Now unless he had intended the Blessing intended in that Promise, his Citation of it to prove what he affirms in this 14th verse, had been impertinent. And besides, the Apostle tells us, *verse 29. That if we be Christ's, then we are Heirs according to the Promise.* He doth not, it's true, express what we are Heirs unto, but this 14th verse tells us, it is the Blessing of *Abraham* that is the Good we are Heirs of; Now, saith he, *we are Heirs of this Blessing according to the Promise.* According to what Promise? Why that Promise mentioned *vers. 16.* For that is the Promise that evidently the Apostle intends. Hence this [*Blessing of Abraham come upon the Gentiles*] must necessarily be that very Blessing contained in that Promise, and that was, That as God would be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed, that is, primarily his natural Seed, so he would be a God to his Seed in their Generations, that is, to them and their natural Children, which is the same Blessing that *Abraham* himself was blessed with.

So that we see by the express words of the Apostle, the Promise is granted unto, and settled upon believing *Gentiles* in the same extent and latitude in which it was made to *Abraham*.

IV. and lastly, That this Promise is continued to all his Seed, and in particular to believing *Gentiles*, in the same latitude and extent in which it was made to *Abraham*, may be infallibly concluded from several Passages in the *New-Testament*, as laid together and compared one with another.

These

The Passages amongst others are these, *Mark* 10. 10. *Luk*. 19. 9. *Act*. 2. 38, 39. *Act*. 16. 31. *1 Cor*. 7. 14. From these Passages, as laid together and compared one with another, we may infer these three Conclusions, from all which the Truth asserted will evidently appear.

I. That upon any Parents believing in Christ, the Promise of Salvation belongs not only to themselves, but to their respective Houses; not only themselves as personally considered, but their Houses come under the Promise of Salvation. This is evident from *Luk*. 19. 9. *Act*. 16. 31. compared together. Our Lord Christ tells *Zaccheus*, *Salvation*, upon his believing, *was come unto his House*; that is, as the Apostle explains it, his House was now under the Promise of Salvation. What Salvation he means is evident from the Apostles words, namely, *Eternal Salvation*, as begun in this Life; therefore saith he, *Thou and thy House shall be saved*, which is all one as to say, Salvation shall come to thy House; for Salvation to come to a House, is all one as to say, that House shall be saved, or is under the Promise of Salvation. Hence no Man can rationally interpret *Salvation*, in that Passage of Christ to *Zaccheus*, of Christ himself. Indeed Christ is no where in Scripture called *Salvation* simply and absolutely, nor can Christ possibly intend himself, because he lays the Ground of this *Salvation's* coming to *Zaccheus's* House, in that new Relation he was received into unto *Abraham*; he was now become his Son, and upon that very Ground Christ tells him, *Salvation was come to his House*. Now that cannot be supposed to be the Ground upon which Christ himself came to his

House; he came rather that he might become a Son of *Abraham*, than because he was so; so that he must needs here intend *Salvation* in a proper sense. So that we see expressly, that upon Parents believing, the Promise of *Salvation* belongs to their Houses.

II. That under this Term [*House*] the Children of believing Parents are in a peculiar and an especial manner included and intended. I do not deny, but the Term [*House*] may take in more than their Children; but that they are included, cannot be rationally questioned. Hence for *Salvation* to come to the Houses of believing Parents, is all one as to say, *Salvation* is come to their Children. For as our Lord Christ tells *Zacchew*, *Salvation* was come to his House; so the Apostle *Paul* assures the Jaylor, that upon his believing his House should be saved; and the Apostle *Peter* tells the Jews, that upon their believing, the Promise would be to them and their Children; and our Lord Christ tells us, that of such (speaking of Children) is the Kingdom of Heaven. Now all these Passages, as in the general, and for the substance, intend one and the same thing, so they mutually explain and confirm each other.

Hence for any to understand [*Salvation*] of Christ himself, or [*House*] of *Zacchew* himself, is not only unreasonable, (*Salvation*, when absolutely put, never signifying Christ, nor a Man's self said to be his House) but it is to shut their Eyes against that Light the Holy Ghost himself holds forth for the discovery of the Mind and Meaning of our Lord Christ in that Passage to *Zacchew*.

III. That

III. That Salvation belongs to the Houses, especially to the Children of believing Parents, merely as such; that is, as they are the Children of such Parents, without consideration had to their personal Faith and Repentance. Now this, which it is true is most liable to exception, may be undeniably demonstrated, not only from the Letter of the forementioned Passages, no mention being made of the Faith and Repentance of those Children, of whom it is said, *Salvation was come to them*, or the Promise is to them; but from a two-fold Consideration:

I. That the Promise of Salvation belongs to the Houses, that is, as before, the Children of believing Parents, merely by virtue or on the account of such a Relation they stand in to *Abraham*, as is common to all Believers, this is that of Children. Thus saith Christ, *This day is Salvation come to thy House, forasmuch as he also is the Son of Abraham*. Mark what it is that our Lord Christ grounds his Assertion upon, it is evidently *Zaccheus* his Relation to *Abraham*, as his Seed. And the like must be understood as the Ground of that Promise of *Paul* to the Jailor; he and his House upon believing would come under the Promise of Salvation, forasmuch as he then would become a *Son of Abraham*, as God promised to *Abraham*, to be a God to him and his Seed, which is all one as to say, to him and his House; so that he would be a God to his Seed in their Generations, which is all one as to say, to them, and their Houses. So now *Zaccheus*, being through his Faith in Christ become one of *Abraham's* Seed, our Lord Christ tells him, *Salvation was come to his House*; he, and his House, especially

D 2

cially his Children, were now under the Promise of Salvation, which is the same for substance with that of God's *being a God to them*. Neither can any with any shew of Reason plead the necessity of Faith, or the actual Calling or Conversion of *his House*, to their Joint-Interest with him in this Promise; seeing not only there is no such Qualification intimated to be necessary; but on the other hand, their Interest is evidently declared by our Lord Christ to be *Zaccheus's* Relation to *Abraham*, as one of his Seed; our Lord Christ speaks of the Time present, *Salvation* was then *come to his House*, upon the very first Moment of his believing, and that upon this very account that he now was become a *Son of Abraham*. And this Good, *viz.* to have *Salvation come to his House*, being vouchsafed to him upon that Ground, it must needs be a Good common to all standing in the same Relation with him to *Abraham*. To say to a Man, when made free of a City or Town Corporate, this or that is now your Priviledge, as suppose to use any Trade, or the like, forasmuch as you know your self are made free, it evidently shews that such a Priviledge is common to all that are free of such a City or Town Corporate. So now when our Lord Christ saith to *Zaccheus*, *Salvation was come to his House*, upon that Ground, because he was a *Son of Abraham*, it undeniably implies, that it is a Priviledge common to all believing Parents, as they are the Seed of *Abraham*, and consequently Salvation must needs appertain to the Houses of all Believers, as such, without Consideration had to any Qualification of those intended in this Term [*Seed*].

2. That

2. That the Promise of Salvation belongs to the Houses of believing Parents, upon their own personal believing, is evident from hence; because the Ministers of the Gospel may by warrant from God apply the Promise of Salvation to their Houses, upon the sole account of their own personal believing. This is evident from the Promise of *Paul* to the Jaylor, he promised him, that upon his believing both he and *his House should be saved*. Now look as the Apostle doth propose this Promise to the Jaylor, as a Motive to him to believe, it might have been applied to him upon his actual believing; upon the first moment of his believing, it might have been said, Now the Promise of Salvation belongs to *thee* and *thy House*; or *thou* and *thy House shall be saved*. Now what the Apostle did or might have done, every Minister of the Gospel may do in the like case upon Parents believing; they may apply the Promise of Salvation not only to them as personally considered, but to them and their Houses. And if it should be said, that as the Promise of Salvation was proposed only conditionally to the Jaylor himself, so it must be understood as referring unto his House, as the Apostle assures him, that if he should believe he should be saved, so he only assures him, that if his House should believe, they also should be saved. But now for this, there can be no rational Pretence for such a sence of the Apostle's words, not only because they are exprest and positive without any intimation of any such Condition in respect of his House; but more especially, because in case the Apostle had not intended a peculiar Good accruing to his House upon his own personal believing, which

could be nothing else but their Interest in, and Right to the Promise of Salvation. There can be no Reason imagined why he should add the latter Branch of the Promise, concerning his House, seeing whether he had believed or no, his House should have been saved upon condition of their believing; nor to propose that as a Motive to induce him to believe, which he might have been assured of though he had not believed, had been impertinent, yea, absurd. It must be something accruing to his House by his believing, that must rationally be an Inducement to him to believe. To tell him, that upon his believing, and that as a Motive to him to believe, his House should be saved, when they were brought into no other Capacity in reference to Salvation than they were before, or would have been, supposing he should not have believed, had been ridiculous. Hence, unless we will charge the Apostle with as great an Absurdity as well Man could be guilty of, we must grant he intended as he speaks, *viz.* That upon the Jailors believing, both *himself and House should be saved*, that is, they should come actually under the Promise of Salvation, which in case they should not forfeit by their after failing in performing their Duties indispensibly required to their actual enjoying that Salvation which at present they were actually under the promise of, they should infallibly enjoy it. For that must still be remembred, that though upon Parents personal Faith, their Houses, and especially their Children, come under the Promise of Salvation; yet their future Enjoyment of it necessarily supposes their own performance of the Condition of the Covenant of Grace, as they grow up to years of

of maturity; and supposing there should be any Children in such Houses, as are actually grown up, when their Parents do believe, though a Right to, and Interest in the Promise accrues to them as the Children of such Parents; yet unless they consent to, and take hold of the Covenant, they do *ipso facto* forfeit their Right to and Interest in it: But this we see evidently, that upon Parents believing, their Children have a Right to and an Interest in the Promise of Salvation, without consideration had to any Qualifications in them: which sufficiently shews that the Promise, which was the thing to be proved, is continued to believing Gentiles, in the same extent and latitude in which it was made to *Abraham* at the first establishment of the Covenant with him. The Promise was to him and his natural Children; so it is to Believers, and their natural Children, or (which is all one) to them in their Generations. From what hath been said, two things may be inferred:

1. That it is all one as to the proof of Childrens Interest in the Promise, whether *Zaccheus* or the *Jaylor* had any Infants at that time. If they had any, the Promise did belong to them; if they had none, yet the Promise did belong to their Houses. And the same is true of the Houses of all Believers; if they have any Infants, the Promise belongs to them; if they have none, yet the Promise appertains unto such as are included in the Term [House].

2. We may infer, That the Scriptures sometimes mentioning the Faith and Repentance of the Houses, or of some in or of the Houses of believing Parents, do no way oppose, but on the other

hand strongly confirm the Truth of this second Proposition. Their being savingly wrought upon together with or immediately after their Parents Conversion, hinders not but that the Promise might belong to them, as the Houses, or as of the Houses of believing Parents; but on the other hand, rather proves that it did, Because we read of the Faith and Repentance of some in or of the Houses of Believers, shall we hence conclude, that the Promise did not belong unto them as the Houses of such Parents? how unreasonable would that be! We may rather conclude the Promise did belong unto them.

But to hasten: By what hath been said, our two first Propositions are abundantly, yea, superabundantly established; and the Truth is, the Truth of these two first Propositions appears with so much evidence throughout the whole Scriptures, that it is even a wonder how any of a competent understanding, that are able to compare one Scripture with another, can question the one or the other: yea, I dare boldly say, there is hardly any one Truth in the whole Doctrine of Divinity hath a more full Suffrage from the Scriptures, than this concerning the Covenant-Interest of the Seed of Believers hath. How many plain and express Scriptures have we for it? And the Evidence given in throughout the Scriptures to these two Propositions being so plain and express, it may seem wholly superfluous to take notice of any Objections that may be made against them. To suppose that any thing may be justly objected from the Scriptures against the one or the other, is in effect to suppose that the Scriptures may contradict themselves

selves. And therefore I shall only take notice of three or four Objections, which our Opposers conceive to have the greatest weight in them.

The first Objection that I shall take notice of, is raised from that *Rom. 9. 7, 8.* whereunto is added, *Mat. 3. 7.* and *Joh. 8. 33. &c.* Whereas the Apostle denies that the Children of the Flesh are the Children of God; so he affirms, that the Children of the Promise are accounted for the Seed. So *John Baptist*, and our Lord Christ shew the Insufficiency and Vanity of that Plea the Jews made for the continuance of their Covenant-state, and Enjoyment of all their Priviledges, Benefits, and Blessings, whether present or future, annexed thereunto, grounded upon their Relation to *Abraham*, as their Father.

Object. 1.

Thus it is objected, *That in case Abraham's own natural Seed could not have their Covenant-state, with the Priviledges and Benefits thereunto annexed, continued to them under the Gospel, upon the account of their Relation to Abraham, as his Seed; much less can the Infants of any believing Gentiles be received into such a State, and enjoy the Priviledges and Benefits of it upon the account of their Descent from, and Relation to such Parents.*

Answer.

This Objection hath its rise from the very same Mistake about the true Mind and meaning of God in this grand Promise of the Covenant, wherein he promiseth to be a God to *Abraham's Seed* in *their Generations*, which the *Jews* themselves lay under; the rectifying of which was the Design both of *John Baptist*, our Lord Christ, and the
Apostle

Apostle Paul, in the places mentioned. And the Mistake is this, the Jews thought, and the Framers of this Objection will needs take it for granted, that this Promise did so appertain to all the natural Seed of *Abraham*, whether immediate or mediate, as that they had universally a personal and particular Interest in it; and hence the *Jews* thought that they could not be cast off, nor deprived of the Blessing and Benefits of the Covenant, without a failure on God's part in his Promise. Our Opposers seem to see no other way to vindicate the Faithfulness of God in their actual rejection, than by affirming this Covenant is disannull'd, at least the tenour thereof altered, so as not to take in the natural Seed, as it did (as they suppose) during the first-Testament-Administration; but the Mistake, as to the tenour of the Promise or Covenant, is the same in both. Now the rectifying of this Mistake was the Design both of our Lord Jesus Christ, *John Baptist*, and the *Apostle Paul*; where let three things be considered:

1. That neither *John Baptist*, nor our Lord Christ, nor the *Apostle Paul*, do deny that the Promise had respect to them; yea, the *Apostle Paul* doth suppose, and implicitly grant that it had, which could be no other than that more general Respect before mentioned.

2. That they all speak to or of the *Jews* then in being.

3. That they speak to or of them, as grown up to years of maturity; and hence their Design is only this, viz. to shew that the Promise, as made with such a respect to them, did not infallibly secure their Covenant-state, nor their Enjoyment of the

the saving Benefits and Blessings of the Covenant, without Faith, Repentance, and Holiness on their parts; the Apostle withal shewing, that there was an Election of Grace, as he after speaks, which did and should obtain the Good promised, which they did in respect of those who were grown up to years of maturity through their Faith and Holiness: but in respect of Infants, it was through the gracious Promise of God reaching and taking in them with their Parents; and hence neither the one or the other speaks to or of the *Jews* in these places, carries the least shew of Opposition to either of the foregoing Propositions; but on the other hand, as what the Apostle *Paul* speaks of them, taken in conjunction with the Context, undeniably implies the Truth of our first Proposition. So what they all speak, adds no small Confirmation to the second, as might easily be made appear, were it necessary. Let us only see the Truth of what we now affirm, *viz.* That which the Apostle *Paul* speaks of the *Jews*, is so far from carrying any Opposition to, that it evidently implies the Truth of that Proposition.

For the making of this plain it may be observed, that the Question the Apostle is there resolving, as is granted on all hands, and is evident from the Context, is, *How so great a part of the Jews could be rejected and yet the Faithfulness of God in that Promise made of no effect thereby.*

Now for the Resolution of this Question, he first more generally asserts, that *all are not Israel, that are of Israel.* And then more particularly,

1. Denies, *That all the Seed of Abraham, that is, his natural Seed, were Children, that is, the Children*

Children of God, as he expounds it, *vers.* 8. He denies not but that some were the *Children of God*; all that he denies is, that they were all so. And,

2. On the other hand affirms, *That in Isaac the Seed were to be, and answerably were called*; which he explains in *vers.* 8. namely, *That the Children of the Promise were counted for the Seed*. Where let it be observed, he speaks not of that grand Promise of the Covenant, but of those two Promises, the one made to *Abraham* concerning the Birth of *Isaac*, and the other to *Rebecca*, concerning the preeminence of *Jacob* above *Esau*; and by the *Children of the Promise* he means the Elect.

Now these are such he accounted for the Seed, that is, they are the Persons designed to enjoy the Good promised. For the illustration and confirmation of which, he shews, That Persons might be Subjects of this Promise of the Covenant, yet not be Children of God, nor accounted for the Seed, that is, not appertain to the Election of Grace, and consequently might not enjoy the Good promised; and yet this no Impeachment of the Faithfulness of God in the Promise. And then shews it was so,

1. Among *Abraham's* Children, descended from his own Loins.

2. It was so among *Isaac's* Children, who were Subjects of this Promise, as included with *Isaac* their Father, in that Phrase, [*thy Seed in their Generations*] *vers.* 8, 9, 10. Hence he argues *a fortiori*, If it might be thus in respect of *Abraham's* own Children, and in respect of his next Son's Children, who had the Promise appertaining to them as severally and particularly considered; much more it might be so
in

respect of those, who were the Subjects of this Promise only, as it had a more general respect to them, as of *Abraham's* Posterity. But hence it is evident, the Apostle is so far from denying, either that *Abraham's* own Children, or *Isaac's* Children, were Subjects of this grand Promise of the Covenant, that he plainly grants and supposes that they were : for in case the Apostle did not suppose and take it for granted, that the rest of *Abraham's* Children had been accounted the Subjects of this Promise with *Isaac*, and the rest of *Isaac's* Children with *Jacob*, his instancing in them, as being the *Children of God*, and accounted for the Seed, had made nothing to his purpose, considering the Question he was now resolving, but would rather have made against the Resolution he gives of that Question, as will evidently appear to any that shall thoroughly weigh the whole Context. So that this Text of the Apostle is so far from opposing, that it doth greatly establish the Truth of our first Proposition ; the Apostle evidently granting that *Ishmael* and *Abraham's* Children by *Keturah*, were the Subjects of this Promise as well as *Isaac*, and *Esau* as well as *Jacob*.

Object. 2.

It is said by some, That this Covenant, the Establishment of which with *Abraham* and his Seed in their Generations is recorded, *Gen. 17. 7.* is not that Covenant of Grace under which Believers under the New-Testament are. Hence though this Covenant establish'd with *Abraham* did run in that latitude and extent pleaded for, viz. as taking in Parents with their natural Seed under the First-Testament ; yet no Argument can be drawn from thence to prove that the Infant-

fant-Seed of Believers are still taken into Covenant with their Parents, seeing the Covenant under which Believers now are, is a Covenant quite different from this established with Abraham, this being the Old, and that the New Covenant.

Answer.

This Objection will be sufficiently removed by the Proof of these two Propositions,

I. That this Covenant then established with *Abraham*, was a Covenant of Grace, that is, a Covenant assuring of Spiritual Blessings, the very same Blessings assured and conveyed to Believers by the Covenant they are now under; and a Covenant assuring of such Blessings will doubtless be granted by all Men to be a Covenant of Grace. That this was such a Covenant will appear by these four Considerations.

1. That in case this Covenant only assured *Abraham*, and *his Seed in their Generations*, of a temporal Good; then many thousands that were the undoubted Subjects of it, and that as personally and particularly considered, might and did never enjoy any Good or Benefit by it; and this without any default on the part either of themselves, or any others through whose default they could be supposed to be justly deprived thereof, and consequently merely through God's not performing his Promise: This is evident thus, Because many thousands, that were the undoubted Subjects of this Covenant, might and did die in their pure Infant-state, and consequently were utterly incapable of enjoying any temporal Good. Hence in case this Covenant only assured of a temporal Good, all those so dying must needs fall short of the Good promised.

And

And this could not be through any default of their own, seeing they were (as in their Infant-state) incapable of doing either Good or Evil. And this might be, and often was found true in respect of the Seed of Believers, and consequently no forfeiture of the Promise was made by their Parents; hence their not enjoying the Good of the Covenant, supposing it to be only temporal, could be assigned to no other Cause, but meerly God's not performing his Promise. But now it is certain, none ever did or shall fall short of any Good promised, meerly through a Failure on God's part in making good his Promise. Hence it must needs be a Spiritual Good, which might be enjoyed in another Life, that was the chief and principal Good intended in this Promise.

2. Consider the Subject Matter of this Promise, or the Good promised, and that was, that *God would be a God to Abraham, and his Seed in their Generations.* Now the Psalmist expressly prefers this above any temporal Good whatsoever, *Psal. 144.* last verse. And consequently it must needs be a Spiritual Good, seeing it is impossible that there should be any Good that is greater than any temporal Good, and yet it self is no Spiritual Good.

3. Consider, that the Promise of the Land of *Canaan*, which according to the Letter of the Promise only intended a temporal Good, yet according to a more inward and Spiritual Sence did intend a Spiritual Good, *viz.* Heaven, as is evident from *Heb. 11. 9, 10.* and is acknowledged (at least) by some of our chief Opposers. And how unreasonable and absurd is it to imagine, that the Promise

mise, which according to the Letter intends only a temporal Good, should yet according to a more inward and Spiritual sence intend a Spiritual Good; and yet that this Promise of *God's being a God to them*, which according to the very Letter intends a Spiritual Good, should only intend a temporal Good.

4. Consider that this Promise, as is granted on all hands, intends a Spiritual Good, as made to *Abraham's Spiritual or Mystical Seed*, and answerably must needs intend the like Good as made to his natural Seed; seeing God hath no where in his Word given us a Warrant to interpret it of one kind of Good as made to his Mystical Seed, and of another kind of Good as made to his Natural Seed. So that this Covenant must necessarily be a Covenant of Grace, the Good contained in it was a Spiritual and Eternal Good; and such a Good can be granted to, or enjoyed by Man as now fallen, by no Covenant but what is a Covenant of Grace. But,

II. That this Covenant mentioned *Gen. 17. 7.* was the very same for the Substance of it, that Believers under the New-Testament are under. It is not only a Covenant of Grace, but the very Covenant of Grace that Believers are still under. Now this is undeniably evident from the Apostle's Discourse in *Gal. 3.* Let only two things be considered.

1. The Apostle positively affirms that this Covenant was never disannull'd or abrogated. Thus *vers. 17. This I say, That the Covenant which was before confirmed of God in Christ, the Law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannull,*
that

that it should make the Promise of none effect. That the Apostle speaks of this very Covenant made and establish'd with *Abraham*, is sufficiently evident from the whole Context. 'Tis that Covenant, the grand Promise whereof ran in that tenour, *To thee, and to thy Seed*; see *vers. 16*. Which must needs be this Covenant, no other Covenant made with *Abraham* containing any Promise to his Seed, running in that tenour. Now saith the Apostle, *The Law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, could not disanul this Covenant*; so that this Covenant was not disanull'd by the Law. And let it be carefully observed, that in case it had been disanull'd at any time before our Lord Christ came in the Flesh, yea, or by him when he was come, (and that it hath been disanull'd at any time since, or by any other, I suppose no Man will affirm) it had been all one as to the Apostles design; for if it had been disanull'd before Christ came, or by him when he was come, the Apostle could not have proved, that the *Blessing of Abraham was come upon the Gentiles through Christ*, as believed in, (as we see he doth from the tenour of that Covenant) any more than if it had been *disanull'd by the Law*. So that undoubtedly, this Covenant is the very Covenant under which Believers still are.

2. Let it be considered, that it is by virtue of this very Promise contained in this Covenant that Believers are *Heirs of the Blessing of Abraham*; thus *vers. 29*. So that not only the *Blessing of Abraham is come upon believing Gentiles*, but is come upon them through this very Promise, and that as they are considered under the Notion of *Abraham's Seed*, which puts the matter out of doubt. When Believers are

under this very Promise, or Heirs to the Good or Blessing contained in it, as they are *Abraham's Seed*, who can doubt whether the Covenant, the grand Promise of which they are under, and that as they are become *Abraham's Seed*, be that Covenant that they are now under? So that that Covenant establish'd with *Abraham*, is the very same Covenant of Grace that Believers are now under, is too evident to be denied by any that are but indued with human Modesty.

And whereas some may yet say, The Scripture seems evidently to distinguish between that Covenant the Jews were under during the Old-Testament-Administration, and that Believers are under since the Gospel-Administration, calling the one the *Old Covenant*, the other the *New*. The Answer is at hand, *viz.* That it is readily granted, that the *Jews* were under a Covenant that Believers now are not under; but that was not that Covenant made with *Abraham*, but the Covenant made at Mount *Sinai*. Hence the Covenant, the New-Testament calls the *Old Covenant*, was that made at Mount *Sinai*, and not this made with *Abraham*. The words are plain, *Gal. 4.* latter end. *Heb. 8. 8.*

So that it is past all rational doubt, 'it was the Covenant of Grace, that very Covenant that Believers are now under, that was establish'd with *Abraham*, the Establishment of which is recorded *Gen. 17. 7.* And here we might further confirm what hath been hitherto pleaded for, namely, that the grand Promise of the Covenant is continued to Believers under the New-Testament in the same extent and latitude, *viz.* as including their Infant-Seed with them, in which it was at first made

to *Abraham*; for if the Covenant be the same, the Promises of it must needs be continued in the same tenour in which they were at first made; unless God himself had made any alteration, which it is certain in this respect he hath not done. These things appear with so much evidence, that it is to admiration how they should meet with any Contradiction from any that pretend to take the Scripture as the Rule of their Faith and Practice.

Object. 3: *That since the Covenant of Grace was first made with Abraham, it hath been continued to all Believers, and to their Infants.*

It may be some will yet further say, *That suppose it be granted, that the Covenant then establish'd with Abraham was not only a Covenant of Grace, but the Covenant of Grace under which Believers always have been, and still are; yet the Infant-Seed of the People of God under the First-Testament might be only under the external Administration of it, and not taken in as Parties in the Covenant it self; and hereupon that Administration ceasing, they are no ways concerned in the Covenant, either in regard of the Administration, or the Substance of it.*

Answer: *That the Covenant of Grace was not only made with Abraham, but with all Believers, and their Infants.*

'Tis true, some seem to think so, but their Discourses are cloathed with such Confusion and Obscurity, that it is hard to find out what they mean. But that Infants were not only under the external Administration of the Covenant, but were taken in as Joint-Parties with their Parents in the Covenant it self, is superabundantly evident from what hath been already said. Those that were under the most essential Promise of the Covenant, must surely be under or in the Covenant it self. Now I have sufficiently proved, that Infants of Covenant-Parents were from the first establishment

of the Covenant under the Promise of *God's being a God to them*, which is the most essential Promise of the Covenant, yea, a Promise that virtually comprehends the whole Good contained in the Covenant. So that undoubtedly they were not only under the external Administration, but in the Covenant it self.

Possibly some will yet say, Grant them to have been under this Promise, and answerably in Covenant, yet might not this Promise, at least as appertaining to Infants, be an Appendix to the Covenant of Grace, and not of the Essence or Substance of it, as the Promise of the Land of *Canaan* was.

To that I answer; No, 'tis a Promise that undoubtedly appertains to the Essence of the Covenant; 'tis that which (as I have said) virtually includes the whole Good of the Covenant. And how absurd and unreasonable would it be to take the Promise as made to Parents as of the Essence of the Covenant, when yet as made to their Infants, as only an Appendix to it, especially when it is but one Promise, consisting of two Branches, made to one and the same Person? Neither doth the Scripture give the least Ground for such an Imagination.

Now these Objections being answered, I shall proceed to the third Proposition, only as previous thereto, let it be observed, That I have been hitherto only proving the Interest of the Infant-Seed of Believers in the Covenant, and in special in that
grand

grand Promise of it, concerning *God's being a God to them*. And this was absolutely necessary to be proved before their Right to Baptism be proved seeing their Right to Baptism follows upon their Interest in the Covenant, and is applied to them on that Ground.

CHAP. IV.

The third subordinate Proposition laid down, proved three ways; further confirm'd from those Instances of whole Houses being baptized, recorded in Scripture.

Prop. III.

THe third Proposition then is this, *That all those that are under, or are the actual Subjects of that grand Promise of the Covenant, wherein God promiseth to be a God to Abraham, and his Seed in their Generations, are the due Subjects of Baptism, and ought according to the revealed Will of our Lord Christ to be baptized.*

That the Infant-Seed of Believers are the proper Subjects of that Promise, hath been already proved. I am now to prove, that they being under, or the proper Subjects of the Promise, are the due Subjects of Baptism. Now this may be evidenced past all rational Contradiction these three ways.

1. From the Command of God, enjoining and expressly requiring all *Abraham's Seed* in their Generations to keep the Covenant. The words are express, *Gen. 17. 9. And God said to Abraham, Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou, and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations.*

And that it may clearly appear, how this Command doth warrant, yea, require the Application of Baptism to the Infant-Seed of Believers, as they are Subjects of the Promise, these five things must be distinctly proved.

1. That by [*Covenant*] in this Command, is meant the [*Token of the Covenant*].

2. That the Covenant of Grace always had, and still hath an outward Token annexed to it.

3. That this Command obligeth, not only Parents to have the Token applied to themselves, but to apply it, or to take care that it be applied to their Infant-Seed, as Joint-Subjects with them of the Promise.

4. That as Circumcision was the Token of the Covenant during the Old-Testament-Administration, so Baptism is the Token of the Covenant under the New.

5. That this Command doth equally and alike concern Believers with respect to Baptism, as it did the *Jews* with respect to Circumcision.

These five things being cleared up, and proved, what we affirm will be sufficiently established. And therefore for the first.

1. That by the *Covenant* in this Command is meant the *Token of the Covenant*. This is plain from the Verse immediatly following. Only let it be observed, that the Covenant is first more generally

nerally laid down, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant, thou, and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations.* And then what should be this Covenant at that time, during the first Administration, is declared in the next Verse, it should be *Circumcision*. The Command requires the keeping of the Covenant in general. *Circumcision* is specified to be the Covenant at that time to be kept, though not the only Covenant to be kept.

2. That this Covenant, which hath been already proved to be the Covenant of Grace, always had, and was to have, and consequently still hath a Token annexed to it. This is evident,

1. From the express Letter of the Command. We evidently see the Command is given to *Abraham's Seed in their Generations*, that is, to all his Seed in their Generations. 'Tis not limited to either his Natural or Spiritual Seed, but takes in both. And that this Command reacheth *Abraham's* Spiritual Seed, as well as his Natural, is further evident, because the same Persons must needs be intended in the Command, that are intended in the Promise, *vers. 7*. Now *Abraham's* Spiritual, as well as his Natural Seed, were undoubtedly intended in the Promise. Hence this Command obligeth the one as well as the other. So that while *Abraham* had a Seed upon the Earth, *they in their Generations*, that is, they and their Children, are under the Obligation of this Command, which undoubtedly proves that this Covenant always had, and was to have a Token annexed to it, otherwise God would not command *Abraham's Seed in their Generations to keep the Covenant*, unless there had been a Covenant, that is, a Token to be kept.

2. And yet further, this is evident *de Facto*, that there always has been, and still is a Token annexed to the Covenant. That it had a Token annexed to it during the Old-Testament-Administration, is granted by all; and that it still hath a Token, and that Baptism is that Token, will appear when I come to the fourth Particular. And therefore,

3. That this Command obligeth Parents, not only to have the Token applied to themselves, but to apply, or take care that it be applied to their Infant-Seed. This is evident two ways.

(1.) From the exprefs Letter of the Command, *Abraham's Seed in their Generations* are exprefsly commanded to keep the Covenant, and under that Phrase [*their Generations*] we are to include their Infants; both Parents and Children are included in the Promise, and consequently both must needs be included in the Command. So that Children are under the Command to *keep the Covenant*, which in respect of them can only intend their reception and bearing of the Token of it, and so they are under the Obligation to keep it. Whence they, not having it applied to them, are said to break the Covenant. And if they are thus far to keep it, it will undeniably follow that it is their Parents duty to take care that it be applied to them.

(2.) This is evident from the Displeasure of God against Parents, when the Application of the Token of the Covenant to their Children hath been neglected, *Exod. 4. 24, 25, 26*. From whence it is plain, that as the Infants of *Abraham's Seed*, be they *Jews* or *Gentiles*, are under the Obligation

to keep the Covenant, that is, the Token of it ; so it is the Duty of Parents to take care that it be applied to them, and answerably that they do keep it.

4. That as Circumcision was the Token of the Covenant under the First-Testament, so Baptism is the Token of the Covenant under the New. That Circumcision was the Token of the Covenant under the first Testament is expressly declared, *Gen. 17. 19.* And that Baptism is the Token of the Covenant under the New-Testament, is evident in the general,

1. Because unless Baptism be the present Token, the Covenant hath no Token at all, which we proved before it was to have. Now if Baptism be not the Token, what is the Token to be kept? The Command is yet in force, therefore there is a Token still to be kept. But now there is no Token can with any shew of Reason be supposed to be intended in this Command, but only Baptism, and therefore that must needs be the present Token of the Covenant.

2. This will more fully appear, if we compare Baptism with Circumcision, the former Token of the Covenant. Look what Ordinance under the New-Testament most exactly agrees with Circumcision, and serves to those uses and ends, for or with reference unto which a Token was annexed to the Covenant, that must needs be the present Token, and that is undeniably Baptism. For let us but consider what were the Uses and Ends with reference whereunto Circumcision the first Token of the Covenant was appointed, and we shall find that Baptism is appointed with reference to the

the very same Ends and Purposes. As for Instance,

(1.) Circumcision, as the Token of the Covenant, was that solemn Rite or Ordinance whereby Persons were admitted into, and incorporated in the Church visible. Now that Baptism is appointed for, and serves to the same use and end, is plain, 1 Cor. 12. 13.

(2.) Circumcision was appointed for the sealing, confirming, and assuring to those that were the Subjects of the Covenant all that Good, or all those Benefits and Blessings contained in it. Hence it is said to be to *Abraham*, a *Seal of the Righteousness of Faith*. And of what use it was unto him with respect unto the Righteousness of Faith, of the same use it was to him with respect to the whole Good of the Covenant. And look of what use it was to *Abraham*, of the same use it was to all that were the due and proper Subjects of it, seeing he received it not only as a particular Believer, but as the Father of, and answerably was in his receiving of it, the Pattern to all that should be received into the same Covenant with himself; and of the same use is Baptism, as is evident, 1 Pet. 3. 21. with *Acts* 2. 38.

(3.) The use and end of Circumcision was to engage those to whom it was applied to keep exactly to the Articles of the Covenant. Hence they are said to be *circumcised to the Lord*, Jer. 4. 4. And for the same end again Baptism is appointed; hence the Baptized are said to be *baptized into or unto the Name of the Father, the Son, and Holy-Ghost, and into or unto Christ*, Mat. 28. 19. with Gal. 3. 27.

(4.) Cir-

(4.) Circumcision was appointed a visible Badge whereby the People of God were distinguished from the rest of the World. And of the same use is Baptism, *Gal. 3. 27.* afore cited. Now from the Uses and Ends that the Scriptures declare Circumcision was appointed for, and did serve unto, we may see what were the Uses and Ends in general, for or with reference unto which a Token was annexed to the Covenant. And from the agreement of Baptism with Circumcision, in respect of the Ends and Uses the one or the other were appointed for, it evidently appears that Baptism is the present Token of the Covenant, and answerably is that Ordinance appointed and substituted in the room and stead of Circumcision.

And as a Close to this, let it be observed, that though it should be granted that there were some Uses and Ends, for and with reference unto which Circumcision was instituted, in respect of which Baptism agrees not with it; yet that hinders not, but that Baptism may be and is the present Token of the Covenant, seeing it serves to, and performs all those Uses and Ends that a Token of the Covenant under the New-Testament can be supposed to serve to and perform. But,

5. That this Command doth equally and alike concern Believers and their Seed, as it did concern the People of God and their Seed under the first Testament. As it obliged them to be circumcised themselves, and to take care that their Infant-Seed were circumcised with them; so it still obligeth Believers to be baptized themselves, and to take care that their Infant-Seed be baptized with them. And this is evident from the Consideration of two things in the Command.

1. That

1. That the Command, as firstly and more generally laid down, did not determine what the Token of the Covenant should be, and hence was applicable, and did oblige to whatever Token God should institute. The words are plain and express, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant, thou, and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations*; not thou shalt be circumcised or be baptized, but thou *shalt keep my Covenant*, that is, as afore, the Tokens of the Covenant. Hence, as this Command, as thus generally laid down, no more obliged to Circumcision, than to Baptism; all that it obliged to was to *keep the Covenant*. So when Circumcision was instituted, it obliged to that; but when Circumcision was laid aside, and another Token instituted, which is Baptism, it now obligeth to that, seeing the Command in the general is not revoked, only the Token altered; but the Command is still the same, and obligeth to keep the Covenant still, and answerably it obligeth Parents to have the Token applied to themselves, and take care that it be applied to their Children.

2. Consider the Extensiveness of the Command. It is laid upon *Abraham's Seed in their Generations*, without any limitation, and hence reacheth to, and lies upon *Abraham's Seed* under the New-Testament, as well as it did upon his Natural Seed under the first Testament. So that the Command not determining what the Token should be, only enjoining the keeping of it, whatever it should be, and consequently being applicable to Baptism as well as to Circumcision, and extending to and reaching all *Abraham's Seed*, and consequently believing Gentiles as well as the Jews; it is all one

as if God had said, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant, thou, and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations.* Circumcision under the First-Testament, and Baptism under the second, these being the Covenants successively the one after the other to be kept. So that here is an express Command for the Baptism of Infants, though not in the very Term [*Baptism*], yet under this general Notion, as it is the Token of the Covenant.

That Baptism is the present Token of the Covenant, is before proved. That this Command requires all *Abraham's* Seed, and that in their Generations, including both Parents and Children, to keep the Covenant, that is, the Token of it, is according to the express Letter of the Command.

And that believing *Gentiles* are *Abraham's* Seed, and that under that Phrase, [*thy Seed in their Generations*] are included both Parents and Children, hath been abundantly proved. So that still to require a Command for Infant-Baptism, is little less than to reject the Scriptures. What though it be not commanded under that precise Term of [*Baptism*] seeing it is commanded under that Notion, as the Token of the Covenant? And what though Infants are not expressly mentioned, so long as they are undeniably included in the Command, in that Phrase, [*thy Seed in their Generations*]? Surely it is all one as if they had been expressly mentioned.

Now that this is the true sense of this Command, might be further shewn from the Lords varying the Phrase when he institutes Circumcision, the then Token of the Covenant, and from the necessity of interpreting other Commands, as the prohibiting the making of graven Images, so the requi-

requiring the Observation of the Sabbath after the same manner. But that's for the first way how this last Proposition may be proved, and so I say it may be proved from the Command lying upon all that are the Subjects of this Promise, *to keep the Token of the Covenant*, that is, to receive and bear it, which Token to be kept is at present Baptism.

II. That the Infant-Seed of Believers, as under, or as the Subjects of the Promise, may and ought to be, and answerably in Primitive Times; and that from the very first Institution of Baptism, were baptized, may be proved thus, *viz.* Because they as the Subjects of the Promise do appertain, and were owned and looked upon, both by our Lord Christ and his Apostles, as appertaining to his visible Church, Kingdom and Body. Now all that do appertain, and answerably were owned and look'd upon by Christ and his Apostles, as appertaining to his visible Church, Kingdom and Body, may and ought to be, and answerably were baptized, cannot be rationally questioned, because Baptism was instituted for this very end, solemnly to admit and incorporate into the visible Church, Kingdom, or Body of Christ all that do appertain thereunto, and there was no other way or means appointed for that end and purpose. Hence all that do appertain, or were owned and look'd upon, either by Christ or his Apostles, as appertaining to his visible Church, Kingdom, or Body, may and ought to be, and answerably were admitted and incorporated therein this way, *viz.* by Baptism.

That

That Baptism was appointed for this end and purpose, is plainly exprest, 1 Cor. 12. 13. And that there is any other way appointed for that end and purpose, is not, neither can be affirmed by any. Now that Infants, as under, or as the Subjects of the Promise, do appertain to the visible Church, Kingdom, or Body of Christ, and were owned and look'd upon so to do both by Christ and his Apostles, is plain.

1. Because as under the Promise, and in Covenant with God, they are, as personally and particularly considered, the actual Subjects of the Promise of Salvation. Now whosoever is, as personally and particularly considered, an actual Subject of the Promise, they must needs appertain to the visible Church, Kingdom, or Body of Christ. Christ is only the *Saviour of his Body*, Eph. 5. 23. Though it is true, Christ in a large sense may be, and is in Scripture said to be the Saviour of all Men, and the *Saviour of the World*; yet none but such as are Members of his Mystical Body, at least do appertain thereunto, and have a right of Admission thereinto, are under the Promise of Salvation by him, as personally and particularly considered. Hence all others are said to be *Strangers to the Covenants of Promise*, Eph. 2. 12. So that the Infant-Seed of Believers being under the Promise of Salvation by Christ, and that as personally and particularly considered; and he being only the Saviour of his Body, they must needs appertain to his Body, and answerably ought to be admitted and incorporated into it, which can be no other way but by Baptism.

2. That the Infant-Seed of Believers do appertain
tain

tain to the visible Church, Kingdom, or Body of Christ, and were owned and looked upon so to do by our Lord Christ and his Apostles, is evident, because the Apostle expressly tells us, that the *Promise was made unto Christ*, meaning it of Christ Mystical, that is, the Mystical Body of Christ. And that the Apostle here speaks of the Mystical Body of Christ as visible, is sufficiently evident, because particular and individual Persons might be ordinarily known to appertain to the Body of Christ, as here spoken of. Hence saith the Apostle, *vers. 28.* speaking to the *Galatians*, as visible Members of the Church, *Ye are all one in Christ.* Now it cannot be supposed, that every individual Person among the *Galatians* were really of the invisible Body of Christ. The Apostle sufficiently implieth his Fears of the contrary, *Gal. 3. 4.* so again, *chap. 4. vers. 11, & 20.* But yet not being so far apostatized as to disannull their Membership in the Body of Christ, he tells them they were *all one in Christ*, which undeniably shews the Apostle speaks of the Mystical Body of Christ, as visible. Now we evidently see he owns all to whom the Promise appertains, to appertain to the visible Body of Christ; or as the Promise constitutes of the Body, so it appertains to them as Members of it. Now I say, they appertaining to, and being owned by Christ and his Apostles so to do, to the visible Church, Kingdom, and Body of Christ, they undoubtedly may, and ought to be, and answerably were by Christ and his Apostles, or by others by their allowance and direction admitted and incorporated thereinto by Baptism.

3. That Infants as under this Promise may and ought to be, and answerably were in Primitive Times baptized, is yet further evident, because the Apostle *Peter* plainly declares, that Interest in this Promise is alone by it self a sufficient Ground for the application of Baptism. Hence he exhorts those awakened Jews to be baptized upon this Ground, or for this Reason, *that the Promise did belong unto them*, Acts 2. 39. saith he, *Be baptized for the remission of Sin, for the Promise is to you.* It is true, he exhorts them to Repentance, with which Faith must be conjoin'd as necessary to their Interest in the Promise; but it was their Interest in the Promise, that he grounds his Exhortation to them to be baptized upon. Hence however Persons come to have an Interest in the Promise, whether it be by their descent from Covenant-Parents, or by their own personal Faith and Repentance, it is all one as to our present purpose. 'Tis their Interest in the Promise that is the proper Ground, and that alone is a sufficient Ground for the application of Baptism, *Be baptized, for the Promise is to you*; not, be baptized because you have repented, but because *the Promise is to you.* And this is agreeable to the first Command to keep the Covenant, that is, the Token of the Covenant; the Command is grounded upon Interest in the Promise, Gen. 17. 9. *Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore*, that is, upon this Ground, because the Promise is unto thee, and having the Promise, thou shalt upon thy Interest therein keep my Covenant. So that Interest in the Promise is a sufficient Ground for the application of Baptism, and Infants having an Interest in the Promise they have a sufficient

Ground for the application of Baptism to them, and answerably may and ought to be baptized. And that which may yet further assure us, that it is Interest in the Promise that is the alone Ground, and that that is a sufficient Ground for the application of Baptism, is the Reference that Baptism hath to the Promise. It hath no necessary reference to Repentance, nor Repentance any necessary reference unto it; and hence Baptism may be applied where Repentance goes not before, as is evident in the case of *John Baptist*, and our Lord Christ himself. 'Tis the Promise alone that Baptism hath a necessary reference unto. Hence whoever have an Interest in the Promise, they are the true and proper Subjects of Baptism, and answerably ought, (as in Primitive Times they had) to have it applied to them.

IV. For the further Confirmation of this last Proposition, namely, That the Seed of Believers, as being under the Promises of the Covenant, may and ought to be baptized; let the several Instances of Households being baptized be duly weighed. That whole Households, together with the Heads or Governours of them respectively, were frequently baptized, is expressly declared in Scripture, *Acts* 16. 14, 15, 33. So *1 Cor.* 16. 16. Now that we may see what Evidence these Instances give to the Truth pleaded for, let three things be considered.

1. That there is a very great Probability, if not an absolute Certainty, that if not all, yet some in or of these Households were baptized, as the Seed of believing Parents, without respect had to any personal Qualifications of their own. And the Probability

bability (if not Certainty) of this will appear, if we first consider that we must comprehend all the natural Seed in those Households said to be baptized. Whoever were comprehended; yet none of the Children ought to be excluded. We must take the words of the Holy Ghost according to their proper sense and signification. Now the words do necessarily include their Children.

2. These Houses or Households may be rationally supposed to be considerably great. These Phrases of *Households*, *all his*, and the like, are a sufficient Ground for such a Supposition.

3. That not only Infants new born, but Children, as arrived to a higher state of Childhood or Youth must be supposed to be baptized upon the account of their Fathers Faith, supposing there were any such in those Households: And the reason of this is evident, because it cannot with any shew of reason be supposed, that such Children, though arrived to some use of Reason, could yet attain to such a measure of Knowledge in the Myteries of the Gospel, as would have been necessary to qualify them for Baptism, had they been to be baptized on their own account, in so short a time as did intervene between the Conversion of Parents, and the Application of Baptism. Children, though past meer Infancy, yet while in their Youth or Childhood, cannot be supposed to attain to the Knowledge of Gospel-Myteries in the same space of time that Persons come up to their full maturity may do. So that it must be either granted; that some in or of these Households were baptized as the Children of believing Parents, on the account of their Parents Faith; or we must

either deny, not only that there were any pure Infants, but any Children in their Childhood or Youth in these Houses; or else we must contradict the express Letter of the Scriptures. But now to deny the former, is at least (to say no more) somewhat unusual; that so many Houses, and these considerably great, should not only have no meet Infants, but no Children yet in their Childhood or Youth, is utterly improbable; and to depart from the Letter of the Scriptures, where there is no reason why we should so do, is not only unreasonable, but in a sense impious. So that these Instances make it at least exceeding probable, that some were baptized as the Children of believing Parents, without consideration had to any personal Qualifications of their own. Households were baptized, and it can hardly be supposed that so many Families, and these considerably great, should have neither any new born Babes, nor yet any as yet in their Childhood or Youth; and if any such there were, they must be baptized upon the account of their Parents Faith.

This will more clearly appear, if we take a particular account of *Lydia's* House, said to be baptized with her, *Acts 16. 34, 35.* For, 1. It is evident her Household was with her at that Assembly to whom the Apostle preached, as appears from ver. 15. 2dly, It's evident that this was an Assembly of Women, ver. 13. 3dly, There's no mention made of the conversion of any, excepting *Lydia* her self. Now that *Lydia* should have an Household all of Women, as so they must be in case she had no Children, and these grown up and all converted at one and the same Sermon, when not
one

one in the whole Assembly besides was converted; and yet that the Holy Ghost should take no notice of any of their Conversions, but only of *Lydia's* herself, seems utterly improbable. That such a thing is possible cannot be denied, but sure that it is improbable must be granted. As for those Brethren mentioned vers. 40, there is no rational ground to suppose that they were of *Lydia's* Household said to be baptized. It is certain they were not, for they were all at the Assembly with her, which is expressly said to have been an Assembly of Women. But,

2. Let it be considered that it doth not appear from Scripture, that any one in or of those Households said to be baptized, were converted before their Baptism, excepting only the Persons whose Households they were. This is evident past all Contradiction in respect of *Lydia's* Household. And as for the Jailor's, though it be said, that *Paul and Silas spake to him the Words of the Lord, and to all that were in his House*; yet,

(1.) From this it cannot be concluded, that any said to be baptized were converted before their Baptism. *Act 16:33.* seems to intimate that it was after; and besides, all things are not recorded in the Scriptures exactly in the order in which they were done.

(2.) It doth not appear, that those to whom the Word was spoken were the same individual Persons said to be his, who were baptized, they seem rather to be the Prisoners, and those that appertained to the Prison, as Under-keepers, and such like.

(3.) Though some of them might be the same

Persons, yet it doth not appear that they were converted by the Word. So that from these Passages it cannot be proved, that any of his, said to be baptized with him, were converted before their Baptism.

And as for what is said concerning his rejoicing, *be with his Household believing in God*; if the words were rightly translated, they are so far from proving the Conversion of his Household before their Baptism, that they rather intimate the contrary; they should be translated, *He rejoiced with his Household, be believing in God*. And the Apostle laying the Ground of his Households rejoicing in his personal Faith, seems plainly to imply, that the Good that was the matter of their Joy, did arise from his Faith.

And as for Stephen's Household, there is nothing evidencing that any of them were converted before their Baptism, although it is said, they addicted themselves to the Ministry of the Saints, yet that they were the same Persons intended in that Term [*Household*] said to be baptized, is uncertain; or suppose some of them might be, yet whether they were converted before their Baptism is uncertain; how long this Epistle was written after he and his Household were baptized, we cannot say; some then in their Childhood might be grown up to a capability of ministering to the Saints when this Epistle was written.

3. Let it be considered in the last place, that though it should be granted, that some in or of those Households might be converted before their Baptism, yet from thence it cannot be concluded, that all intended in these Terms [*Houses or Households*]

helds] were so. Suppose some in the Jailor's House might be converted before their Baptism, yet it will not follow from thence, that all were so: and much less will it follow, that there were none in *Lydia's* House baptized, but such as did personally believe. Now if there be but a probability, that any one in or of these Households said to be baptized, were baptized on the account of their personal Faith, that gives as full an evidence to the Truth pleaded for, as the probability of all in those Houses being baptized on the same account would do. So that sure it cannot be denied, but that all these Instances do at least make it probable, that some were baptized in Primitive Times, as the Children of believing Parents, without Consideration had to any thing in themselves; and a Probability added to those foregoing Arguments may greatly establish us in the Truth pleaded for. But as a Close of all, let these two things be considered,

1. The utter Improbability, in case it had been the will of our Lord Christ that none but adult Believers should be baptized, that the Holy Ghost should leave upon record the Baptism of so many Households, and yet leave it utterly uncertain whether any in or of these Households were baptized on the account of their personal Faith and Repentance, especially there being so great a Probability, according to the account he gives us of some of those Households, that there must needs be some more of them, who must be baptized on the account of their Parents Faith. We cannot reasonably imagine, that the Holy Ghost would record these Instances so as to give so great an occasion of Mistake

to the People of God, to take up a Practice so prejudicial to the Honour of Christ, and his Interest in the World, as our Opposers suppose the Baptism of Infants to be, in case it had been the will of our Lord Christ they should not be baptized.

2. Consider how the Holy Ghost doth vary his manner of expression, when he speaks of the Baptism of Housholds, and when he speaks of the Baptism of others. When he speaks of the Baptism of Housholds, he tells us of their Baptism together with the chief Heads and Governors, not taking the least notice of the Faith of any in or of those Housholds, as the Ground of their Baptism; but when he speaks of the Baptism of others, he speaks more distinguishingly, *So many as gladly received the Word, were baptized.* And why the Holy Ghost should not express himself after the same manner, when he speaks of the Baptism of Housholds, no rational account can be given, save only this, that it is to shew, that as the Covenant with the Promise thereof is continued to the Infant-Seed of Believers; so that the present Token, which is Baptism, should be applied unto them.

But to have done with this: From all that hath been said, our three foregoing Propositions are sufficiently evident, and from all our main Conclusion, viz. *That it is the Will of our Lord Christ, that the Infant-Seed of his People should be baptized, fully established.*

CHAP. V.

Sundry Objections answered. The Conclusion.

Object. 1.

THE main and chief Objection against Infant-Baptism, and that which alone is of any considerable weight, is that raised from *Mat.* 28. 19, compared with *Mark* 16. 15, 16. where we have the Institution of Baptism, as some (though groundlessly) would have it rather the Commission, authorizing and enjoining the Administration of that Ordinance among the Gentiles recorded. And I find our Opposers grounding their Plea against Infant-Baptism upon this Commission, two ways.

I. Some argue from a threefold Supposition, which they conceive this Commission lays a fair Ground for, as differently recorded by those two Evangelists.

1. That that Relative Term [*them*] must refer to [*Disciples*], supposed to be included in the word which we translate, *teach*, or as others would have it, *disciple* or *make Disciples*, as its Antecedent, and not to that word [*Nations*].

2. That Infants not being capable of teaching, neither are, nor can in propriety of Speech be said to be *Disciples*.

3. That

3. That this Institution or Commission is to be understood as excluding all from Baptism, who are not comprehended in it; hence they argue, that the Subjects proposed by our Lord Christ to be baptized being Disciples, and Infants not being, nor in propriety of Speech can be called Disciples; and all others besides Disciples being excluded by Christ, his proposing them only to be baptized; hence Infants neither may nor ought to be baptized.

In Answer to this we say, That all these Suppositions are utterly groundless and false.

For the first, viz. That [*them*] must refer to Disciples included in that word we translate *teach* or *make Disciples*, and not to *Nations*. This we utterly deny, and affirm on the contrary, that it must refer to *Nations* and not to *Disciples*, and that for two Reasons.

Reas. 1. Because we ought to keep to the literal and plain Grammatical Construction of Scriptures, where there is no necessary reason why we should depart therefrom. Now according to the literal and plain Grammatical Construction of this Scripture, [*Them*] must be referred to [*Nations*], whether we translate that word to *teach*, or *make Disciples*. Go, saith Christ, *teach all Nations*, or *make all Nations Disciples*, baptizing *them*; baptizing, who? why, according to the literal Construction of the words, the *Nations* to be taught or made Disciples; and here is no reason why we should depart from the literal and plain Grammatical Construction of the words. But,

2. It is altogether doubtful whether our Lord Christ in this Commission had any respect to such a
Criti-

Criticism as this, *viz.* That Disciples are included in that word we translate to *teach*. Now to depart from the literal and plain Grammatical Construction, when there is no reason so to do, upon the Supposition of a Criticism; in a word, when it is utterly uncertain, whether our Lord Christ had any respect to any such Criticism or no, is unreasonable, and subjects all Scriptures to be framed into any form, according to the various Fancies of Men: So that undoubtedly they are the *Nations* that are to be baptized.

And as for what is said to give Countenance to this Supposition, it signifies nothing at all. For,

1. Whereas it is said, Thus to expound this Text agrees with what is recorded of Christ, *viz.* That *he made Disciples*, and by his Disciples *baptized them*; this is of no weight, for though he *made Disciples*, and *baptized them*, *viz.* by his Disciples; yet it is not said, he only baptized them he made, or might make Disciples, and order them to be baptized, and with them their Children or Housholds.

2. Whereas it is yet further said, that thus to expound this Scripture seems best to agree with the words of *Mark*, recording the same Commission: And answerably, that that Clause in *Mark*, *Go preach the Gospel to every Creature*, answers this Clause in *Matthew*, *Go teach all Nations*; and the next Clause in *Mark*, *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved*, answers this other Clause in *Matthew*, *Baptizing them*. And consequently, that the Subjects of Baptism must be Disciples, and those Disciples must be Believers. For answer to this, there is no necessity that we should take these
several

several Clauses, as answering one another; we may conjoin both the words of *Matthew* and *Mark* together, and take the Commission as given out by Christ in more words thus: *Go, teach all Nations, baptizing them, I say, Go, preach the Gospel to every Creature: he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.* And then as in *Matthew* that Phrase [*all Nations*] expounds that Clause in *Mark*, [*every Creature*]; so in that following Clause *Mark* only shews what should be the Issue of their Administration of these two Ordinances of Preaching and Baptizing, not at all determining the Subjects of the one or the other: as for those that did believe, and were baptized, they should be saved; but as for others that believe not, they should be damned, whether baptized or no.

3. Whereas it is yet further said, That in case we refer [*them*] to the *Nations* to be taught, and not to *Disciples*, without any limitation, then this Commission would warrant the Baptism of all Nations, or all Persons in every Nation, whether they are taught or no, which to affirm is absurd.

But to this the Answer is at hand, That the Directions about the Administration of both these Ordinances, left in other Scriptures, sufficiently prevent that Inconvenience.

Now this first Supposition being utterly groundless and false, the other Suppositions fall with it, and are of no use as to the end intended in them. For as for the 2d. *Whether Infants are, or can in propriety of Speech be called Disciples?* It matters not, seeing they are not Disciples, but the Nations, whose Baptism is warranted and required in this

this Commission. And as for the 3d. *That this Commission is to be understood as excluding all from Baptism, that are not comprehended in it*: Suppose it should be granted, yet it makes not against Infants Baptism, seeing they are not excluded out of it, but rather included in it, as part of the Nations to be baptized. But because the Supposition is false in it self, for some may be baptized, and that by virtue of this Commission, who are not in express Terms comprehended in it, as will appear in the Answer to the Objection, as raised by others. And therefore,

II. Others argue against Infant-Baptism,

1. From the plain Order (as they express it) laid down by our Lord Christ in this Commission, and according to this Order (as they suppose) these two Ordinances of Preaching and Baptizing, ought to be universally administred, and this Order is, that Men should be taught the Doctrine of Faith.

2. That being so taught, they should be baptized.

3. That they should, in the School or Church whereof they are then made Members, be instructed in every thing else they ought to learn. Hence it is concluded, that none but such as are taught, and by teaching made Disciples, ought to be baptized, and consequently no Infants.

In Answer unto which we lay down three Conclusions.

1. That notwithstanding this Order in which the Commission is laid down, yet it doth not (as taken

taken absolutely in its self) necessarily exclude Infants from Baptism. This is proved two ways,

1. From the general Acknowledgment of our Opposers themselves.

2. This is evident in it self, because as there is no mention of Infants, so no Word, Phrase, or Expression, that can rationally be interpreted as necessarily excluding them. All that can be said to this is, *That our Lord Christ not mentioning Infants together with the Order here laid down for the Administration of Baptism, is sufficient Ground to conclude that they are excluded.*

But to that I answer, That this is no sufficient Ground to conclude that they are excluded. This is undeniably evident from a twofold Consideration.

1. It is possible that Christ may have given out this Commission only with reference to grown Persons, and hath revealed his Will concerning the Baptism of Infants in other parts of his Word. Yet let none say, as Mr. H. has done, that I grant that he has given out this Commission only with reference to the Adult. I only say, it is possible he might have done it; and that is enough to prove, that the Commission as absolutely taken doth not exclude Infants.

2. That our Lord Christ might, as it is certain he did not, intend this Commission as a full Directory for his Apostles and Ministers in the Administration of these two Ordinances. And that our Lord Christ did not intend that this Commission of it self should be fully and absolutely directive of the Apostles and Ministers in the Administration of either of these Ordinances, is past all rational

nal questioning, because there are many Questions referring to the execution of it, which cannot be determined from the Commission it self, but must be determined from other Scriptures, as for Instance,

(1.) How the Nations should be discipled? whether only by teaching them, or by baptizing them?

(2.) Who among the Nations, or who among those to whom the Gospel should be preached, were to be accounted Disciples, and answerably to be baptized?

(3.) Whether the Nations should be baptized as Disciples, or as Men.

(4.) After what manner Baptism should be administered, whether by dipping, or by pouring water upon the Face, or the like? &c.

(5.) Whether Males, or both Males and Females, ought to be baptized?

And our Opposers themselves are forc'd to betake themselves to other Scriptures for the resolution of these five Questions: And why we may not do the like for the resolution of this Question, Whether only grown Persons, or they and their Infants, ought to be baptized? no rational account can be given.

Now this Commission not being intended, as these Instances undeniably prove that it was not, as a full Direction to the Apostles or Ministers of the Gospel for the administration of this Ordinance; it will undeniably follow, that it doth not exclude, but on the other hand may include the Baptism of Infants. And if any shall say, Sure if it had been the Will of our Lord Christ that Infants should have

been baptized, he would have expressly declared it in this Commission: In answer to such I would say, it was far more necessary, that seeing it was his will that Females as well as Males should be baptized, he should have expressly declared that; then though it be his will that Infants should be baptized, he should have declared that, yet we see he did not; it is enough that he has declared his Will both as to the one and the other in other parts of his Word. But for the further satisfaction of this Doubt, I shall lay down a second Conclusion.

Concl. 2. That seeing our Lord Christ hath sufficiently declared his Will in other parts of his Word, both as to the Covenant-Interest of the Infant-Seed of his People, and their Right to the Seal and Token thereof, it was no way necessary he should particularly mention that in this Commission; and the Commission, though it mentions them not, yet doth sufficiently warrant their Baptism. For the clearing up and illustration of this, let these two Suppositions be put, First, that had God sent his Prophets, or any of them, under the First-Testament-Administration, to preach the Gospel as then revealed to the Gentiles, or any Nation among them: Secondly, That he had continued Circumcision under the Gospel-Administration, as the Token of the Covenant; either of which he might have done, had it pleased him. Now I would ask any rational Man, Whether this very Commission, only substituting Circumcision in the room of Baptism, had not been sufficient to have warranted the Circumcision of Infants as well as of grown Persons, though they had not been expressly mentioned

mentioned; yea, whether it would have been at all necessary that they should have been mentioned? And why the bare Change of the Token of the Covenant should make it necessary that Infants should be mentioned in the Commission, no Reason can be given.

To make this yet more plain, Suppose our Lord Christ should have thus express'd himself in this Commission, *Go teach or disciple all Nations, baptizing them*; for the Covenant with the Promises thereof shall be still extended to, and establish'd with both Jews and Gentiles, and their Children together with them, as it was of old with the Jews. I say, had he thus express'd himself, he had not come much short of mentioning Infants; why; let but the Scriptures formerly mentioned be compared together, 'tis all one as if he had so express'd himself.

And if any shall yet say, That if Infants are baptized, then the Order in the Commission is cross'd. I answer, The Commission is not cross'd; while only the Rules, that our Lord Christ himself hath left for the guiding of his Ministers in the execution of it, are observed. But for the full satisfaction of this Doubt, we lay down the last Conclusion; and therefore,

Conc. 3. That notwithstanding it is the Will of our Lord Christ, that Infants should be baptized, yet it was rational, yea necessary, that he should have express'd himself in the Commission in the order he hath done. For that,

(1.) Consider what was the State or Condition of the Nations to whom the Apostles were now sent, they were in a state of Darkness and Ignorance;

range : hence the preaching of the Gospel antecedently to the Administration of Baptism, was absolutely necessary.

(2.) Consider the gradual Procedure the Gospel should, and answerably hath made in subduing the Nations unto Christ. There alway have been, and still are some Nations to be *discipled*, and *brought home* to Christ ; and all Attempts to disciple them, and bring them to Christ, must be by preaching the Gospel to them, the Discipleship of Parents still preparing the way to their own and their Childrens Baptism.

(3.) Consider, that when Nations are discipled, yet the preaching of the Gospel hath a precedency to the Administration of Baptism ; the Seed of Believers baptized in their Infancy must be taught, and thereby brought to a sincere embracement and performance of the Condition of the Covenant, to which as the Seed of such Parents they were afore received, in order to their conveying unto their Children, Right to the Covenant, and to Baptism as the Seal and Token thereof.

Object. 2.

Some may further object, *The Inconsistency of such things, as are in the Scriptures declared to have attended the Administration of Baptism, and are affirmed of, and required from such as were baptized in Primitive Times, with the Doctrine and Practice of Infant-Baptism ; and for this such Scriptures as these, viz. 1 Cor. 12. 13, 14. Ephes. 4. 16. Gal. 3. 26, 27. are alledged.*

Answer.

This Objection is easily removed by a threefold Consideration.

1. That

1. That what is declared of, or required from those that are Members of the visible Church, or are to be incorporated therein by Baptism, in these and the like Scriptures, agrees to, and equally concerns the Church, and the several Members thereof in all Ages; hence it may as well be concluded from these Scriptures, that Infants never were, nor ever shall be admitted into the Church or visible Body of Christ, the contrary whereunto is evident past all possible exception, as that in Primitive Times they were not, or now are not to be incorporated into that Body by Baptism.

2. Consider, that it is a thing of frequent occurrence in Scripture, for things to be spoken of, or to whole Bodies or Societies, and that in the most universal and indefinite Terms, which yet are to be understood variously, with respect to the particulars according to their respective Capacities and Concernments therein. That Speech of *Moses* to the *whole Congregation of Israel* furnisheth us with sufficient Instances for the proof of this, see *Deut. 29th and 30th Chapters.*

3. Consider, That the Scriptures were written, not for the use of Infants in their pure Infant-state, but for the use of grown Persons; and that the Design of the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures mentioned, is to instruct and establish them in some necessary Truth, or excite to some necessary Duty; and answerably what is spoken in those forementioned places only, concerns such Persons as are capable of receiving such Instructions, and practising such Duties; but that proves not that Infants are not of, or to be admitted into the Church

or visible Body of Christ by Baptism.

Object. 3.

Others object, *the Apostles Doctrine, taken in conjunction with the Primitive Practice.* Say they, *The Apostles in their Doctrine did teach, that Believers should be baptized, and there is no mention of their teaching that Infants should be baptized. So we read of many Believers baptized, but of no Instance of any one Infant that was baptized; and therefore sure Infant-Baptism cannot be according to the mind and will of Jesus Christ, but must be a Practice introduced into the Church by Men.*

Answer.

To this four things may be said,
1. That the Apostles did teach, that the *Promise of Salvation* doth belong, and consequently the Covenant in which the Promise is contained, must needs extend to the *Houses of Believers*, and that as such, without consideration had to the Faith and Repentance of any in or of their Houses.

2. That they did exhort Persons to *be baptized* upon the account of the Promises belonging unto them, and this is all one as if they had expressly taught that Infants should be baptized. It is undoubted, that the Infants of Believers are of their Houses, and being so, must needs be under the Promise of Salvation. Now if one may be baptized upon the account of Interest in the Promise, any other may be so also; so that they did teach what amounts to as much as if they had in express Terms taught that Infants should be baptized.

3. That the Apostles did baptize whole Households, and sometimes such as in which we read not of the Conversion of any, excepting the chief Heads

Heads and Governours only, and in which there is the greatest probability that there were some Infants, at least some in their Youth or Childhood, who cannot rationally be supposed to be baptized on the account of their own personal Faith and Repentance. Which taken in conjunction with the two foregoing Particulars, makes it vastly more probable that they did baptize some Infants, than the Scriptures not expressly recording their Baptism, makes it probable that they did not baptize any.

4. That the Scriptures not expressly recording that the Apostles did either teach or practise Infant-Baptism, is no proof that they did not do both. Many things that the Apostles taught and practised, are not recorded in Scripture, as it is said of Christ, *He taught in his Doctrine, and did many things which are not written*; the like may be said of the Apostles. It is sufficient that the Scriptures in general declare the whole Mind and Will of God concerning the Faith and Practice of his Church and People, though it be not recorded. That some of the Penmen did teach and practise every Duty appertaining thereunto, that the grand Promises of the Covenant appertain to the Seed of Believers, and that all to whom those Promises do appertain ought to have the Token of the Covenant applied to them, is sufficiently evident throughout the Scriptures, both in the Old and New Testament. Hence, though it be not recorded in express Terms, that the Apostles did either teach or practise Infant-Baptism, yet we may safely conclude they did both.

Object. 4. *Lastly, It is farther objected by some, That Infant-Baptism cannot be according to the Mind and Will of Christ, because of their Incapability of the Ends and Uses of Baptism.*

Answer.

It is sufficient that they are capable of some, at least the main and chief Ends and Uses of Baptism. It is no way necessary, that every one to whom either Circumcision of old was, or Baptism now is to be applied, should be capable of all the Ends and Uses of the one or the other. Who dare deny, yea, or question, but that our Lord Christ may appoint the Application of Baptism to Infants, as capable of some of the Ends and Uses of it, though incapable of others; and that they are capable of some, yea, the main and chief Ends and Uses of Baptism, is and must be granted on all hands. Hence their Incapability of some of the Ends and Uses of it, makes nothing at all against their Baptism.

Now then our three Propositions being (as we see they are) firmly established, by the unanimous Suffrage both of the Old and New-Testament, and all Objections of weight that may be made against the one or the other of them being removed, we are safely led by them to our main Conclusion, viz. *That it is the Will of our Lord Christ, that the Infant Seed of Believers should be baptized.* They are under the Covenant, as having the main Promises of it appertaining to them, and answerably ought to have the Token thereof applied to them.

And as a Close of all, what remains, but that

as

as Believers maintain, and cheerfully proceed on in that Practice ; so both they, and their Children, as growing up to years of maturity, do well improve these great Priviledges, which God of his abundant Grace and Mercy hath granted unto them. Which that they may do, I have in a third Tract, according to Divine Assistance given in, endeavoured the resolution of four Questions, viz.

1. What are the Reasons of God's appointing the Application of the Token of the Covenant to the Infant-Seed of his People ?
2. What are the Benefits and Advantages accruing to them thereby.
3. What is the Duty of Parents towards their Children, as bearing the Token of the Covenant.
4. What Improvement Children may and ought to make of the Token of the Covenant, as applied to them in their Infancy, as they grow up to years of maturity.

In the resolution of all which Questions, I have studied both brevity and plainness ; neither do I see how what hath been said, could be well contracted into a narrower room, without prejudice to the Ends aimed at, the whole being but as it were an Epitomy of what may seem necessary to be spoken, considering the weight and importance of those Questions ; nor do I know well how to express my self, *consideratis considerandis*, with more plainness than I have done, nor am I as yet made sensible, that any thing proposed or asserted in the resolution of the one or the other of them, needs a further Confirmation than what it already hath received,

ceived. That which is most doubtful, so far as I yet understand, at least to Pædobaptists, to whom (as well as to Antipædobaptists) I had a respect in that Treatise, is, Whether all those Benefits and Priviledges, that in the resolution of the second Question I have assigned to the Infant-Seed of Believers, do really and truly appertain unto them, or only in *foro Ecclesie*, or in visible appearance? To whom I would only say, That in case the Covenant is enter'd with, and the Promises thereof made to them definitely, that is, with and to each of them in particular; and consequently, that all those Benefits and Priviledges are granted, and do belong to them universally, or to every one of them in particular, as in case the Promises be made to them definitely, they must needs do; it will necessarily follow, that they are granted, and do appertain to them in reality and truth, as well as in outward appearance. Granting the former, there is no more just reason to question the latter, than there would be, supposing a Man were known and granted to be a true Believer, yet to question whether all this Good, or all these Benefits and Priviledges do appertain to him in reality and truth or no, seeing as they are the Seed of true Believers, such as are Believers not only in the sight of Men, but the sight of God, that I speak of.

So the Covenant is entred with, and the Promises of it, made to them meerly as the Seed of such Parents, without respect had to any Qualifications in, or any Conditions to be performed by them. Whence, supposing we grant the Covenant is entred with, and the Promises thereof made to them definitely, or with and to each of them in particular,

lar, in case we either question, whether all that Good, and all those Benefits and Priviledges are granted, and do appertain to them universally; or whether supposing we grant that, yet question whether they are granted and do appertain to them in reality and truth; it must be either because we question whether all that Good, and all those Benefits and Priviledges are contained in these Promises of the Covenant appertaining to them; or because we question whether God be faithful in his Promises, that is, do indeed and in truth grant unto, or confer upon those to whom the Promises do appertain, what Good is really and truly contained in them. Either of which things why we should rather question in respect of Infants, than grown Persons, no rational account can be given. And to question, much more to deny the one or the other, has a direct tendency to overthrow the Faith and Comfort of all Believers, and render the Covenant of Grace with the various Promises of it utterly insignificant, and of no use unto Men. Indeed that which seems to cause some to hesitate about, and keeps them from a ready Compliance with what I have affirmed, is a Supposition, that the Case of Infants is the same with, at least like unto the Case of grown Persons; because grown Persons may visibly appear to be in Covenant, and have the Promises thereof appertaining unto them, and consequently to have all that Good, or all those Benefits and Priviledges granted to and conferred upon them, when yet neither the Covenant, nor the Promises of it, do indeed appertain to them in the sight of God, and consequently none of that Good, or of those Benefits

nefits and Priviledges do appertain to them in reality and truth. They are ready to think it may be so with Infants. But now the Case of grown Persons and of Infants in this matter is wholly different; the Interest of grown Persons in the Covenant and Promises of it, depends upon their own performance of the *Conditions of the Covenant*; but it is otherwise with the Infant-Seed of Believers, they have their Interest in the Covenant purely from the Promise, as made to them as the Seed of believing Parents. Hence, suppose that Parents are true Believers, their Seed must needs have a like Interest in the Covenant that they themselves have, and the same Good, or the same Benefits and Priviledges must needs be granted to, and conferred upon their Seed, that are given unto and conferred upon themselves. Now that the Covenant is indeed entred with, and the Promises thereof made to the Infant-Seed of Believers definitely, I have (as I conceive) sufficiently proved. And I had intended to have somewhat further enlarged and strengthened these Reasons already offered; and also to have added somewhat more for the Confirmation of that their definite and particular Interest in the Covenant, and Promises of it: But not having as yet met with any Objections against those Reasons already offered, I shall for brevity sake forbear, and only say to the sincere Enquirer after the Mind of God in these things, *Consider what hath been said, and the Lord give thee Understanding in all things.*

Μὲντοι τῷ Θεῷ δόξα.



*To the Godly and Learned among the
Antipædo-baptists, especially the
Authors of the late Confession of
their Faith.*

Reverend and beloved Brethren,

THe Design of the preceding Sheets being to lay level with ordinary Capacities, what I have already made publick in a Method more suiting Scholastick Educations, the adjoining an Address unto you may justly be deemed improper. That I may therefore do both you and my self right, I shall give you a brief account of my thus doing. Far be it from me once to imagine, that the one or the other of those Tracts, or any thing in them (a Recapitulation of which this is) is unto you unintelligible. I doubt not but that at least (will you make use of those Abilities, both natural and acquired, you are so plentifully furnished with) you can take a prospect of what I have said from first to last, and by comparing one thing with another, pass a judgment upon the whole. It is true, to note in one passage, those two, (*viz.* Mr. H. and Mr. D L.) who have seen meet to take notice of what I have written, seem to complain of obscurity,

rity, although I had neither set down my Thesis distinctly, nor prosecuted my Arguments syllogistically, at least in a form intelligible to all Persons. But I am perswaded their Complaints had their rise from some other Cause, and not from any difficulty themselves found; and whether I had any reason to take any notice of the former's Complaint, or the latter, to object it as a Failure in me that I did not, I shall leave with you to determine.

I shall not deny, but that the Method I have proceeded in hath render'd those Discourses somewhat obscure to Capacities unacquainted with the Rules of Logical Argumentation, neither was I without some previous Intimations that it would so do; yet was not I thereby discouraged from the publication of them; my main design being, by the rectifying some *Mistakes* I saw some of the chief Asserters of Infant-Baptism lay under, and the addition of some few Arguments overlook'd by them, to establish more fully that Practice in the Minds of the Learned; wherein what success I have had, or yet may have, through the Blessing of God upon my weak endeavours, I shall leave to the observations of others, and the discovery of Time. This I can through Grace say, I have not as yet seen any Cause to repent, either of the Pains I have taken, or the Charges I have been at; neither had I any cause to fear that I should willingly, or could be justly suspected designedly, through any unsound Mediums, or fallacious Reasonings, to promote an Error, while I designed to establish the Truth. I was well assured there were those of your Perswasion, who could sufficiently understand me,

me, and were able to detect both the unsoundness of my Mediums, and Fallaciousness of my Arguments, had the one or the other been so: but no Attempt of that Nature has as yet been made by any. But to return, this I was saying, It is far from me to imagine, that what I have already written is to you unintelligible: Let not therefore my adding this Address to you to this *Compendium* be offensive, either to you or any others, as though 'twere a Reflection upon your Understandings: but three things have induced me hereunto.

1. The Encouragement you have given me in your late *Confession*, and *Appendix* thereunto annexed, and that not only by your Orthodoxy in the main Doctrines of the Gospel, but more especially by that Discovery you have there made of your Love to the Truth, Moderation of Spirit, and being through the anointing of the Spirit not only shewn but led into that καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ὀδὸν, recommended in 1 Cor. 12.31. to us by the holy Apostle of the Gentiles. It is indeed hard for any *reciprocare serram* in Polemical Divinity, especially in that dawning Light we are yet under, without being in one respect or another, if not really, yet in appearance, injurious one to another. Now when it is not Love to Truth, but Desire of Victory, that keeps up the Contest, these Injuries, whether real or supposed, will ordinarily be more heeded than the Arguments urged: but when Love to Truth prevails,

Solent Injuria illis prestare suffragium, quibus Studium est non de veritate sed propria gloriari victoria; in his autem qui totâ Intentione cupiunt de comperta veritate gaudere locum hac penitus non habent. Maxent. Dialog. contra Nestorian. lib. 1.

vails, especially if attended with those other blessed Fruits of the Spirit, Moderation and Charity, as Plain-dealing will not be reputed injurious, so even that which may be really judged to be so, will be overlook'd and passed by. Which things I having more abundant Ground to hope are true of you, I cannot but promise myself, that as what I shall say, though it be with much freedom of Speech, shall meet with a candid Interpretation, yea, and a kind Reception from you; so in case any thing injurious should unwittingly (for wittingly there shall not) drop from my Pen, that shall be no Let to your more through weighing the Arguments I have offered, or embracement of Truth, so far as by them it is demonstrated.

2. That in case any of you shall farther appear in the ventilation of this Controversy, which I would by no means discourage you from, you may with more ease take a full prospect of it, at least as managed by me, both as to the Foundations I have laid, and the whole Structure built thereupon, and not be put to the trouble of bringing things together, that lay in my former Treatises at some distance one from another, in order to a due comparing them one with another.

3. I may probably here have put my last hand to this Controversy, I am aware of the uncertainty of Life; neither am I (supposing God should lengthen out that) altogether without hope that the addition of any thing more in pursuance of it will be utterly unnecessary; the Reasons of this my Hope will more fully appear before I take my leave of you.

And now, Brethren, having given you this brief
Account

Account, both negatively and positively, of my adding *these Lines* to you to the foregoing *Compendium*, bear with me, though I say to you, as *Elihu* to *Job*, *I am full of matter, the Spirit within me constraineth me; I must speak, that I may be refreshed; and let me I pray you* (as he there adds) *not accept any Mans person*. I speak to you as Friends, yea, as Brethren, as Joint-heirs with us of the common Salvation, purchased by our Lord Christ both for you and us. Hence, as Plainness of Speech most becomes me, so to you (I hope) it will neither be offensive nor grievous. Your Orthodoxy and Soundness of Judgment in the main Fundamental Doctrines of the Gospel, with that Love to Truth, Moderation of Spirit, and Christian Charity, afore taken notice of, appearing in your late Confession, and Appendix thereunto annexed, are greatly commendable; and I hope I may truly say, they have endeared you, not only unto me, but to all that love our Lord Christ in sincerity: neither shall you (as I hope) at any time find me in Endeavours after mutual Love, Conversation, and Christian Communion, in things wherein we are agreed, in the Rear, as you have still done in these unpleasing Contests. For though I would, and dare do no less than * manifest a true Zeal in maintaining the Truth; yet that through Grace shall be no Let to me in an amicable and peaceable walking

* *Quia inextricabile quoddammodò malum nunquam desinit humana corda pulsare, atq; inopinatis argumentis fidem inquietare Catholicam, necesse est Sectarioribus veritatem prudenter captiosas ejus sententias praevidere, sapienterq; detegere, prolatasq; in medium malleo veritatis cohibere, & usque ad effusionem sanguinis contra eas pro veritate certare. Ibid. pref.*

walking with you according to what we have jointly attained unto. I have of a long time been, and still am wholly perswaded, that those Alienations of Affections, and Distances in point of Christian Conversation and Communion in things wherein they all agree, found among Christians, holding the Head, and sincerely embracing and practising the Truth as it is in Jesus, according to the measures of Light they have respectively received, are utterly dissonant from the Doctrine of our Lord Christ and his Apostles, and the Simplicity of the Primitive Practice. And surely, might we be so happy, as to take true measures of those Differences that are between us, and manage them with that Spirit of Moderation and mutual Forbearance that the Gospel requires, it would not only not a little conduce to our mutual Edification and Comfort, but greatly obviate those Offences taken at them by the Men of the World. Grace never shines more brightly, nor appears with a greater lustre, than when it is duly exercised under visible Disadvantages. Hence if that mutual Love of Christians (when yet thinking the same thing) appeared so beautiful in the eyes of the Heathens, that they could not behold it without an, *Eccē quam mutuo se amant* : much more would it so do, when it is kept up under the disadvantages of some Differences both in Judgment and Practice. And hence the Disadvantages Religion may lie under through the Differences in Judgment and Practice among the more strict Professors of it, would be abundantly recompensed through the Illustriousness of their Grace, rendred more beautiful by occasion of them. And hence, as I cannot but greatly commend

trend in you that Gospel-becoming Frame of Spirit you have discovered ; so you may assure yourselves, I shall through Divine Assistance always endeavour to maintain and promote the like, both in my self, and all others walking in the same steps with me, according as opportunity is put into my hands.

But Brethren, though I cannot but in faithfulness commend what appears in you so greatly commendable ; yet I must, and that also in faithfulness to you, shew you wherein I cannot but judge you blame-worthy. I remember what the Cornick saith, *Assentatores non veniunt ut arideant, sed ut odorant.* Flattery, however it may please, yet is prejudicial. Two things more especially I cannot but judge blame-worthy in you :

1. That when you come to give the Reasons why you cannot acquiesce in what (as you express) is urged by us against you, or (as you elsewhere candidly interpret) is offered for your Satisfaction, you wholly overlook those Scriptures and Scripture-Arguments, that we, at least some of us, conceive most cogent, and answerably are most insisted on by us, to establish our Practice, and convince you of your Mistakes, and either only suppose us to reason quite otherwise than indeed we do, or only single out some of those Scriptures and Arguments drawn from them, that we only make use of as additional enforcements of our main Arguments, but not as demonstrative of themselves.

First, I say, you suppose us to reason quite otherwise than indeed we do, or to make use of other Mediums than indeed we do. Thus in your

114th and 115th pag. you thus express your selves, *That altho this Covenant-Holiness & Church-Membership should be, as is supposed, in reference unto the Infants of Believers; yet no Command for Infant-Baptism does immediatly and directly result from such a Quality or Relation; insinuating thereby as though we should affirm there did, which we do not.* So pag. 125. you again thus express your selves, *Of whatsoever nature the Holiness of the Children mentioned, 1 Cor. 7. 12. be, yet they who do conclude that all such Children (whether Infants or of riper years) have from hence an immediate Right to Baptism, do (as we conceive) put more into the Conclusion, than will be found in the Premisses.*

Whereas we do not conclude meerly from their Covenant-Holiness, that they have from thence any immediate Right to Baptism; we only improve that Scripture as a Confirmation of their Covenant-state, which you at present deny not, neither will you determine of what Holiness the Apostle there speaks; so that as you grant not, so you deny not but the Apostle may speak of a foederal Holiness, which is all that we affirm. Hence what you subjoin in those 114 and 115 pages, so in 125, and onwards to 129, is utterly impertinent. We say not that a Command for Infant-Baptism doth immediatly and directly result from their Interest in the Covenant, or Church-Membership; but this we say, that God having graciously extended his Covenant to them, hath been pleased of his Sovereign will and pleasure to annex a Command, that the Token of his Covenant (whatever that should be) should be kept both by Parents and Children, which Token of the Covenant we say was Circumcision under the first Testament, but now is Baptism,

tism. And besides, there are other Arguments which you cannot certainly be unacquainted with, which do (supposing that their Federal Holiness and Church-Membership) undeniably establish the dueeness and rightfulness of their Baptism. So that (I conceive) you cannot possibly grant their Federal Holiness and Church-Membership, but you must grant their Baptism. Now for you to overlook all these Arguments, and fain us to argue quite otherwise than indeed we do, (or if possibly any have done, yet their Mistakes have been rectified) is (to say no more) matter of great admiration. The reasons of your so doing must be left with your selves; yet I cannot but tell you that such Dealings have a sad tendency to obstruct that good Design, *viz.* the Reconciliation of our mutual Love each to other, which you seem to carry on. It will beget a kind of Suspicion in the minds of Men, that you too wilfully shut your Eyes against that Light that is held forth unto you.

Secondly, You only single out some of those Scriptures and Arguments drawn from them, that we make use of as additional Enforcements, but not as demonstrative of themselves. Thus for those Instances of whole Families being baptized, we only improve them as a further Confirmation of our main Arguments, but not as demonstrative as of themselves, and that upon supposition of the federal Holiness and Church-Membership of the *Infant-Seed* of Believers, and the validity of those Arguments we have urged for their Baptism upon that Supposition. That these Instances may be taken in as additional Confirmations of our Practice, I am verily perswaded your selves will not deny. So that

alas! Brethren, what a slender account have you given us of the Reasons of your non-acquiescence in what is urged by us against you. No wonder if you so greatly mistake us on the one hand, and on the other hand overlook our main Arguments, and then only take notice of what Scriptures and Arguments we make use of only as additional Confirmations, though you cannot comply with our practice.

2. That which I cannot but judge alike blameworthy in you, is your too evident Partiality. This is so apparent in your Citation of, and Remark upon Dr. *Lightfoot's* Interpretation of that *Rom. 4. 11.* that it is a wonder your selves should not see it. The Doctor conceives that Circumcision is there said to be a *Seal* not merely (for in some sense he grants it might be) of that *Righteousness* Abraham had while in his *Uncircumcision*; but more especially of that *Righteousness* which his uncircumcised Seed, that is, believing Gentiles, should have when they should come to imitate his Faith. Now you conceive that this is so evidently the true sense and meaning of the Apostle in that place, that it is impertinent for any to alledge that Scripture to prove that Circumcision was a Seal of the *Righteousness* of Faith, either to *Abraham* himself, or to any of his circumcised Posterity. But Brethren, let me prevail with you seriously to weigh these few things, which I shall but as it were propose to your consideration.

1. Consider, that this Interpretation seems utterly inconsistent with the Apostle's design and scope in that place. The Apostle's design is to shew that *Abraham* both had a *Righteousness* imputed

to him, and had Circumcision given him as a Seal thereof, *That he might be the Father of all that should believe, who were of the Circumcision*; but this Interpretation supposes him already their Father.

2. But secondly, And rather consider the utter Improbability, that this is indeed the true sense and meaning of the Apostle; let me say, *cum paucis viri*, that the Doctor's words are so far from having any evidence, as you conceit, that they have not any probability of Truth in them. For,

(1.) Should it be granted, which yet it is not, that Circumcision might be of this use as applied to *Abraham* himself, who was the Father of all that should believe; yet why it should be of the same use as applied to all his natural Posterity, as this Interpretation takes it for granted that it was, no reason can be imagined. A Seal is for confirmation of somewhat to the Parties to whom it is given; now why God by this Seal of Circumcision should confirm to the Jews the Promise of justifying the Gentiles, through a Righteousness imputed to them upon their believing, when it did not seal or confirm the same Good to themselves, is hard to imagine.

(2.) Circumcision is expressly said to be the *Token of that Covenant* established with *Abraham* and his Seed in their Generations; but now the Imputation of Righteousness to us Gentiles upon condition of our believing, was no Article on God's part in the Covenant, as entred and established with *Abraham's* natural Seed, at least as severally and particularly considered, and as the Covenant was so entred with them, Circumcision was the Token of it. Hence how it could seal to them what was

no-where promised to them is hard to imagine.

(3.) This Interpretation, at least as you seem to take it, supposes that the natural Seed of *Abraham*, though in Covenant, yet had not a Righteousness imputed to them: for how unreasonable would it be to say that Imputation of Righteousness to the Gentiles was sealed to the Jews, and yet that Righteousness imputed unto them not alike sealed unto them; that would be to say, they had a Good of which they had no Promise sealed to them, and yet that Good of which they had a Promise not sealed to them.

(4.) According to this Interpretation the Apostle's words can hardly be good sence, seeing the Righteousness of Faith is not a Quality inherent in, but a Relation predicable of those to whom it is imputed; but according to this Interpretation the Apostle's words must run thus, *He received Circumcision, a Seal of the Righteousness which should be in the Circumcision*; for the words are, *ἐν ἀρεσ-
Cus*.

(5.) Adde this one thing more, That the very same Phrase in the next verse is and must necessarily be render'd as it is by our Translators in this. Now to understaud the same Phrase after such a different manner in one verse, from what it must necessarily be understood in the next, when there is no warrant from Scripture, nor any just reason from the Context so to do, is unreasonable. But,

3. Suppose we should grant the Doctor's Interpretation to be right, which you see we have no reason to do, yet neither is your Cause at all advantaged, nor ours prejudiced thereby, seeing he grants

Grants that Circumcision in some sense was a Seal to *Abraham* of that Righteousness which he had by Faith while in his Uncircumcision. Now of what use it was to him, of the same use it was to all to whom it was rightfully applied, as I have elsewhere fully proved : Now suppose it might have a further respect, yet that no ways prejudices the Use and Improvement we make of the Text for the establishment of our Practice. So that I cannot but greatly wonder that you should put such a Remark upon that Interpretation of that Scripture, which seems evidently inconsistent with the Apostle's scope, is utterly improbable in it self, and yet is of no use to the furthering of your Cause, nor makes any head of Opposition against ours.

And truly, Brethren, I now begin to less wonder that you acquiesce not in what is offered by us for your satisfaction ; it cannot be thought strange that you should continue your Practice different from ours, when you either only suppose that our Practice is established by such Arguments as we make no use of, or if any haply have made use of them, yet they are confessed by others of us to be invalid, and in the mean time overlook those Arguments which we conceive to be cogent and demonstrative, and withal take a Conceit of one single Man, (however Learned, and in other matters Judicious) that indeed hath no probability of Truth in it, nor really of any use to you, to carry such evidence of Truth, as though sufficient to counter-balance the Judgments of all others, though at least some of them not inferior unto him either in Learning or Judgment, that are otherwise minded ; though it is to me matter of no

small Admiration, that you who can with great Judgment examine other controverted Doctrines, and hold fast that which is good, should so do.

And when I find you thus partial towards this Cause you have espoused; wherein I am enforced to appear in opposition to you, I have some Ground to suspect that what is written by any other in opposition to what has been offered for your satisfaction, or in favour of your Cause, may find that entertainment with you, which otherwise should any considering what is written suppose that it would find, you probably would return some such Answer as *Hazael* returned to *Elisba*, 2 Kin. 8. 13. And therefore I have judged it not altogether in vain herewith to present you with some brief Reflections upon a Sheet of Paper not long since published by one Mr. D'Laune, making a shew of a Confutation of my Books. Indeed had I not some Intimations, whether my Information fail me or no I cannot certainly say, as though one of no small note among you should say, *That Mr. D'Laune had performed his Undertaking with a great deal of Reason*, or words to that effect, though himself had been told, and that by one of no small Judgment in this Controversy, that Mr. D'Laun's Book as to me signified not two Straws, I could hardly have imagined, what power soever Anticipations and Prejudices may have upon the minds of Men, it could have signified any more to any of you. Whether it do at least deserve to signify any thing more, I shall now refer to the determination of God's Vice-gerent, I mean Conscience in you. The Title Mr. D'Laun gives his Papers is, *A brief Survey and Confutation of Mr. Whiston's Books*: but he

he hath seen meet to assault only the first, with the Postscript of the last, and that at such a vast distance that I can hardly think (setting aside what he saith to the Preface wherein the Controversy is not directly concerned, and that brief Account that he gives of my Books) had he not mentioned my Name, that any Reader could ever imagine he had any respect to my Book, yea, or had ever seen or read it, so far is he from a Confutation of it. The whole of what he saith hardly makes fourteen Pages, five and a great part of the sixth of which contains a Confutation (according to his Title) of my Preface, and a brief Account of some part of my Book.

As to what he saith to my Preface, of how little signification it is I shall wholly leave to your Judgments. I say not that the Causes there assigned of the prevailing of your Judgments and Practice, are the Causes of all their rejecting the Practice we contend for, and embracing yours, who do reject the one and embrace the other; nor will he (as I suppose) engage for all of your Perswasion, that the Cause of their embracing of that Perswasion is not the one or the other of the things there mentioned; or if he should, doubtless there are not many will believe him to have such acquaintance with the Hearts of Men, as to put any value upon that engagement; but suppose he could, how is the Cause contended for by me prejudiced thereby? And as for the Digression concerning Consequences he falls into upon occasion of the third Cause assigned by me, I dare boldly say, you know and cannot but acknowledg he perfectly trifles; neither can I imagine any other Reason of that Digression

gression, (for I suppose we are fully agreed about Consequences) except it be to usher in that Argument he lays down in his third Page, which he would have his Reader believe unanswerably proves that there is indeed no Birth-Holiness under the Gospel-Administration; but whether it be of any more weight than if he had said, There is none, because there is none, is left to your Judgments. How absurd is it to jumble together the Covenant-Interest or Federal Holiness of the Seed of Believers, with things purely Ceremonial? That all Ceremonial Differences between Meats, Birds, Beasts, and so forth, are taken away, we readily grant; but that the Birth-Priviledg of the Seed of Believers was ever founded in that Law, we utterly deny, and affirm on the other hand, that it is founded in the Covenant of Grace, which is one and the same in all Ages, nor doth Mr. D'Laun offer the least Proof that it is otherwise. So that I shall appeal unto Mr. Delaun's own Conscience, whether in this Argument he did not knowingly and designedly parasyllogize, or put a Fallacy on his unwary Reader?

Brethren, I must tell you plainly, and sure you cannot but know it, that such Dealings greatly reflect upon your Party, they will (do Men what they can) beget Prejudices in their Minds, they favouring so much of that ~~wisdom~~ the Apostle speaks of, whereby Men not only of unsound Judgments, but corrupt Minds, lie in wait to deceive. Now then be you your selves Judges, to how little purpose Mr. D'Laun has spent above one third part of his pretended Confutation of this first Book.

But

But to come to his Confutation. And thus after the afore-mentioned account he gives of my Book, he thus begins, pag. 6. *As to Mr. Whilston's first subordinate Proposition, being before rejected, I say, &c.*

Mr. D'Laun here tells us he hath rejected my first Proposition, but refers us not to the place where, that we might see whether he hath done it upon any rational Grounds or no; nor do I find where he had afore rejected it, much less any Reason of his so doing. As for his following Discourse, that which he drives at in it I suppose is this, *viz.* to shew, *That the Covenant of Grace is such, as that neither the natural Seed of Abraham, or of any other believing Parents, as such, can have an Interest in it, or Right to the Promises of it.* And hence he would have his Reader conclude, that this my first Proposition cannot be true, unless supposing by Covenant I mean the Covenant of Circumcision; nor can I rationally make that use of that Promise for the establishing the Practice of Infants Baptism that I do. Now let us see how he hath performed his Undertaking; in order whereunto I shall first pare off what is impertinent as to his present purpose, seeing he is now in pretence confuting my Book; and thus his whole Discourse, which takes up upward of two more of his fourteen Pages, about the manner of the Covenant's Administration, must be laid aside, as that wherein my Book is no way concerned, seeing I sufficiently declare, and certainly Mr. D'Laun could not but know it, that when I affirm the Infant-Seed of *Abraham* and of all other *Believers* are taken with their Parents into the Covenant, I still mean the Covenant it self,
and

and not its outward Administration; and then to what end and purpose he should enlarge so much upon the manner of the Covenants Administration remains with himself, nothing I have said is at all concerned therein. Now then take the Covenant as considered in regard of its Essence and Substance, and let us see,

First, How far Mr. De-Laun and I are agreed, and we evidently agree in two things.

1. That God in that Promise, Gen. 17. 7. intended *Abraham's* natural Seed. That Mr. D' Laun agrees with me in this, is evident; for in his 12th pag. he expressly grants, that if I mean the Covenant of Circumcision, as it is called *Acts* 7. 8. neither himself nor any Body else denies this my first Proposition. Now I have sufficiently declared that that is the Covenant that I mean; and by the Covenant of Circumcision I mean the Covenant the Sign or Token of which was Circumcision, and so far ought I know doth Mr. D' Laun too. I confess, there is a Passage or two in his Papers that seem to intimate, that by the Covenant of Circumcision he intends Circumcision it self, or the Command enjoining Circumcision; but his granting, that if when I say that Promise of God's being a God to *Abraham* and his Seed respected his natural Seed, I mean the Covenant of Circumcision, neither he nor any Body else denies it, plainly shews that he cannot so understand the Covenant of Circumcision here, seeing that is a Command laid upon *Abraham* and his Seed, and not a Promise; and he cannot possibly imagine that I should have respect to that Command, because I not only speak of a Promise, but expressly shew

shew that it is that very Promise v. 7. that I have reference unto ; so that Mr. D'Lawn and I are plainly agreed in this.

2. We are agreed in this, *viz.* Either that there are two Covenants, each of which may bear the denomination of the Covenant of Grace, the one absolute, the other conditional, or else that one and the same Covenant, usually called the Covenant of Grace, may be distinguished of as absolute or conditional. And that we are agreed in this is evident, because Mr. D'Lawn, having spoken of the absolute Covenant of Grace, and having affirmed that this Covenant belongeth not to Infants (as I am far from saying that it doth) he immediately adds, *The conditional Covenant of Grace, if they will so call it, &c.* It may seem he would rather have it called a mutual Covenant ; but we see that he plainly distinguisheth between the single or absolute Covenant, which he saith was made with the Elect, and the mutual or conditional Covenant, which is offered to all, and actually made with Believers as such.

So that in these two things Mr. D'L. and I are agreed. And if it be said, wherein then lies the Differences between us ?

I answer, I conceive it lies here, That whereas I affirm that this Covenant mentioned *Gen. 17. 7.* was not only a Covenant of Grace, but is the conditional Covenant of Grace, under which Believers always have been, and still are. Mr. D'Lawn either holds that it was the old Covenant, which he supposeth to have been a Covenant of Works, and which is said by the Apostle to be vanished away ; or else that it was a complicated Covenant,
both

both the Covenant of Grace, and also the Covenant of Works, as he calls it, or the old Covenant. Which Conceit, supposing either Mr. *D'Laun* or any others have embraced it, may claim the Primogeniture among all the Absurdities that have ever dropt from the Pen of any that ever communicated any thing to publick view. That one and the same Promise should constitute both the Covenant of Grace and the Covenant of Works, (and he must hold it of one and the same Promise, viz. that mentioned in *Gen. 17. 7.* or he speaks nothing to the purpose) is so extravagantly absurd; that it seems very harsh to charge any Man with it, unless he had in express words affirmed it; yet I much suspect it is Mr. *D'Laun's* Conceit, as well as it was Mr. *Hutchinson's* before him, but I shall leave Mr. *D'Laun* to explain his own Notions. Surely he could not but know, I having so expressly declared my self in that matter, (see *Book 1. pag. 51.*) that both in my first Proposition, and the whole use I make of that Covenant established with *Abraham*, for the establishing the Practice of Infant-Baptism, I still look upon it as the conditional Covenant of Grace, or the Covenant as conditionally made.

Now then having seen wherein we agree, let us see how substantially either this my first Proposition, or the use I make of that *Gen. 17. 7.* for the Ends mentioned, is by all that Mr. *D'Laun* hath said, confuted. And in *Confutationem*, the Sum of all he hath said amounts but to this, *That he himself and some others, both Pedobaptists and Antipedo-baptists, have sue'd a sence and understanding of the absolute or single Covenant of Grace, as that it admits not any*
Infants

Infants (as such) to have an Interest in it. But how either my *Proposition*, or any Use I make of that Scripture, should be concerned in any Man's sense or understanding of a Covenant, I neither intend, nor have any respect unto, or at least of the Covenant of Grace, as falling under another Notion than that I consider'd it under, I shall leave to you and all other Men, to judge and determine as you and they see meet. But suppose Mr. D'Laun and those others he mentions, should speak of one and the same Covenant, or of the Covenant under one and the same Notion that I do, what a slender Confutation of my *Proposition* is it to tell us, *that he and some others have a different understanding of that Covenant from what I have?* And yet this it seems must go for a *Confutation*, yea, a *rational Confutation of my Book*. But who knew not that those who deny Infant-Baptism have a different sense and understanding of the Covenant of Grace than what I have, before Mr. D'Laun's Papers saw the Light?

And if any shall say, Though it is true, what Mr. D'Laun here saith is no sufficient Confutation, either of my first *Proposition*, or of the Use I make of this Covenant, seeing what he saith concerns a *distinct Covenant*, or the Covenant as considered under a *different Notion* from that Covenant that I make use of for the establishing the Practice of Infant-Baptism, or the *Notion* under which I consider it; yet take the Covenant in that sense that I do, and Mr. D'Laun (when he comes to vindicate Mr. *Hutchinson*) hath proved that it concerns not Infants; So in his 18th Page, and he seems to have proved it by two Reasons.

First,

First, Because he can find that Covenant to be no other than this, that *he that believeth shall be saved.*

2dly. Because the Covenant of Grace (he speaks of the *conditional Covenant*) gives what it requires, and enables the Covenanters to perform the Condition required, which cannot be affirmed that it doth to Infants while such.

In reference whereunto I shall only say, that neither of these Reasons is a sufficient Proof. For as for the first,

1. The Fault is in Mr. D'Laune; would he search the Scriptures, and open his Eyes to the Light held forth from them, he may easily see the Covenant, as thus consider'd, may, yea, doth take in Infants with their Parents.

2. As to his other Reason, It amounts to neither more nor less than if he had said, *The Covenant as conditional concerns not Infants, because it is an absolute Covenant.* To say, *the conditional Covenant gives what it requires,* is of a like import as if it should be said, *the absolute Covenant requires Conditions.* But would Mr. D'Laune have attended to what (I suppose) he hath read, he might have seen how Infants may be in the *conditional Covenant*, and yet never be enabled to perform the Conditions of it, and yet that not from any failure on God's part in his Promises. See my first Book, pag. 49, &c. 208, &c. See also my Essay, pag. 88.

Now then, Brethren, whether Mr. D'Laune hath rationally rejected my first Proposition, or confuted that, or the Use I make of the *Covenant* entred

entred with *Abraham*, I shall freely leave to your, as well as all other Mens Judgments, and proceed to his Confutation of my other two Propositions.

As to his pretended Confutation of my second subordinate Proposition, I shall freely leave it at the Bar of your, yea, of all Mens Consciences, to determine, whether what he hath said carries the least real appearance of such a Confutation as he pretends unto. Nay, I dare appeal to any Man of a competent understanding, whether what I have said for the proof of this second Proposition may not be much more justly accounted an Answer to, and Confutation of his Suggestions, than what he hath said accounted a Confutation of my Proposition. Alas! what hath he said? for whereas I had proved this second Proposition four ways, he only takes notice of the last. And whereas I had quoted several Texts of Scripture, from all which, as compared together, and mutually explaining each other, I had drawn five Conclusions, the three first of which I had insisted more especially upon by way of Proof, as making more directly to the proof of this Proposition; he wholly waves those Arguments and the Reasons by which I had confirmed them, and only cites the Scriptures themselves, and that without the least notice of their mutual Aspect one upon another, and glosses upon them severally as he sees meet, and that in a direct opposition to what I had evidenced to be the Mind of the Holy Ghost in them.

Indeed he sets down one of my Conclusions, but how wretchedly he wrests my sence and meaning in it, will appear to any that will read what he saith, and turn to my first Book, pag. 124. and

to my Answer to Mr. *Danvers*, pag. 113. Alas Brethren! can you think your Cause can be long upheld by such shuffling, yea, and I may say, dishonest dealing? But to hasten.

As to what Mr. *D'Laun* hath said either for the Confutation of this second, or my third subordinate Proposition, I have only this further to say, My Books, as well as what he hath said either in this Sheet, or in his Reply to Mr. *Baxter*, are extant, and may be compared together; which in case any shall neglect to do, their Opposition to this part of the Counsel of God that concerns the Baptism of Infants, supposing them drawn thereinto, or establish'd therein by any thing Mr. *D'Laun* hath said, will be justly charged upon themselves.

But to proceed and touch upon Mr. *D'Laun's* Vindication of Mr. *Hutchinson*, and at the very entrance he thus expresses himself, *Where I shall have occasion to enlarge (where it is met) by way of Vindication of Mr. Hutchinson's Animadversions upon this (I suppose it should be) his second Book*, meaning my Answer to Mr. *Danvers*: but the truth is, he is so far from enlarging, that he offers not one word or syllable by way of Vindication of his Animadversions upon that Book; save only that in the Close he reflects upon (not without some severity) some (as he judges) harsh Passages used by me with respect to Mr. *Danvers*, of which more anon, and consequently has left Mr. *Danvers* utterly destitute of any Relief by these Animadversions. What he saith to my Postscript is merely to vindicate Mr. *Hutchinson's* Treatise of the Covenant, from those Reasons I gave therein, why I judged it utterly useless as to the Design carried on in it. And how meanly

meanly he has done it too, will soon appear. For whereas I gave three Reasons why I judged it so; as, (1.) Because he proceeds upon such gross Mistakes about the Ground we lay for the Covenant-Interest, Church-Membership, and Baptism of Infants. (2.) Because he assumes and takes for granted, without any shew of Proof, several things, which he knew or might have known were denied by us: (3.) Because his Treatise labours under such sad Confusion, and that attended with several Absurdities and Contradictions. And I gave ten Instances to make good what I affirm of, and charge his Treatise with, in those Reasons. He only singles out four of them, and consequently leaves his Book justly chargeable with all those things that I assign of its Usefulness; though supposing Mr. D'Laun had fully vindicated him in respect of those four Instances he takes notice of, it would not be so in respect of so many as I gave: And in respect of those Instances he takes notice of: as for two of them he has no other way to vindicate Mr. *Hutchinson* but by mere falsehood, thus in his first and last. Let what he saith pag. 15. ten first lines, be compared with my Book; and it will be found that in none of those Pages cited by him there is any mention of the Relation of the Infant-Seed of Believers unto *Abraham*, except only in the last, nor any one word giving the least Ground to suppose that I ground my Plea for their Interests in the Covenant or Baptism upon that their Relation; the whole Design of my Book is of another Import. And even in that pag. 262, the last Page cited by him, where I mentioned that their Relation, I expressly say, *That in the application of Baptism to them, we have a direct and primary respect*

to their State, as Joint-Subjects with their Parents of the Promises of the Covenant. It is true, I add that, *Look what respect we have to the Mystical Relation of believing Parents to Abraham; in the Application of Baptism to them; the same respect we have to the Mystical Relation of their Infant-Seed to him, in the Application of Baptism unto them.* But my meaning is plainly only this, that it is both Parents and Childrens Interest in the Covenant and Promises, that gives them Right to, and is the Ground upon which we apply Baptism the present Token of the Covenant to them; though we own and acknowledge both to stand alike related to *Abraham* as his Seed; but it is not their Relation unto *Abraham* that we ground their Baptism upon, that is their Covenant-Interest. So that do they stand related to *Abraham* or no, which is wholly another Question, yet seeing they have an Interest in the Covenant, they ought to have the Token of it applied to them. So that I had just cause to charge Mr. *Hutchinson* with that Mistake, and so far as he proceeds thereon, his Book must needs be utterly useless; and yet *ex abundanti* in that very place in my Postscript to Mr. *Hutchinson* I do expressly own that their Relation to *Abraham*, and shew the Insufficiency of his Reasonings against that Ground. Suppose we had pleaded for their Church-Membership and Baptism from it, which we do not, which Mr. *D'Laun* takes no notice of, and yet has the Confidence as though we had indeed argued from it, and I had said nothing for our Justification against Mr. *Hutchinson*, in case we had run into an impertinent Discourse about *Abraham's* Seed; and as impertinently talks of a Question worth my Resolution, which had he read my

Essay

Essay, he might have seen already resolved. So again in the last Instance, in respect of which he attempts Mr. *Hutchinson's* Vindication, pag. 20. Let Mr. *D'Laun*, or any one else, shew where I charge Mr. *Hutchinson* with any such Absurdity as he there saith; I do and shall acquit him of Falshood in this matter. So that Mr. *Hutchinson's* Book remains utterly unvindicated, in respect of eight of those ten Instances I gave to shew the Usefulness and Insignificancy of it, as to the End designed in it. And as for those other two Instances, with respect to which Mr. *De-Laun* may seem to have said something for his vindication; yet if his Words be well look'd into, they will be found of no use for that purpose.

For, as for the one of them, he plainly grants what I charge him with, only attempts his Relief another way, which is no Vindication at all of Mr. *Hutchinson*.

And as for the other, which concerns the Absurdities and Confusion Mr. *Hutchinson's* Book labours under; how has he vindicated him by falling into a double Absurdity himself? (1.) In saying the Covenant of Grace, in respect of its Administration, is a Covenant of Works. (2.) In implying that whatever administers to the Covenant of Grace (for upon that Supposition he must go, or his Vindication of Mr. *Hutchinson* signifies nothing) may be called its Administration; than which what can be more absurdly spoken is not easy to imagine; but that is all Mr. *D'Laun* has to say for Mr. *Hutchinson*; and whether he has not left his Book as he found it, be your selves Judges. Indeed, had Mr. *D'Laun* said, That as under the first Testament the Old Covenant did, so under the New-Testament the

New Covenant does subserve or administer to the Covenant of Grace properly so called, he had possibly hit upon a Truth of no small Importance for the right understanding the various Covenants God has made with Men.

But to have done. As to what Mr. D' *Laur* saith concerning my denying that I call Mr. *Danvers's* Book all Forgery, which he insinuates to proceed from weakness of Memory, you shall be my Judges whether I had not reason so to do, and whether my so doing argues any weakness of Memory or no; surely had I called it all Forgery, Mr. D' *Laur* would have produced my words, which he cannot do. It is true, some have thought I was over-sharp in some Passages in that Book, to whom I have two things to say :

1. That (as Mr. *Hutchinson* apologizing for himself expresses it) Error cannot be disputed against without giving it its Name; and its Abettors cannot be reprov'd and admonish'd but in words accommodating to their Mistakes; which indeed is not railing, but plain-dealing. If this be a sufficient Apology for Mr. *Hutchinson*, why not for me?

2. The true Reason why I did express my self in more sharpness than is usual for me to do, was, that I might have engaged either Mr. *Danvers*, or some other learned Antipædo-baptists, in a thorow examination of the Arguments, I had both in my first Book, and occasionally in that Answer, offered for the establishment of the Practice of Infant-Baptism. I knew the way of my Procedure was somewhat different from what others had gone before me in; and I concluded that a thorow Examination of my Arguments might be greatly useful, either for the

the detection of my Mistakes, supposing I had lain under any, or for the farther establishing of the Practice I pleaded for. A rational Logical Discourse (as I had expressed my self) in the examination of the chief Grounds I had laid down, would have been exceeding welcom unto me, and I judged that such quickning Expressions might have engaged some body in that Service.

I have only thus much more to add, That whereas Mr. *Hutchinson* and Mr. *D'Laun* again and again insinuate, as though I had only dictated, and not added any thing for proof of my Positions and Assertions, I shall appeal to your Consciences whether it be so or no, and challenge Mr. *D'Laun*, yea, or any other,

1. To produce any one Position or Assertion wherein the Cause of Infant-Baptism is concerned, that I have laid down without proof, yea, and that when it can rationally have been judged to be necessary, by Arguments laid down and prosecuted syllogistically,

2. To instance in any one Argument or Objection, that is offered and raised against our Judgment and Practice by Mr. *Tombs* in the third Part of his Review, or any where else, or any other, that I have not either expressly answered, or at least may not receive a just and full Answer from what I have said in the one or the other of those Tracts I have made publick.

To instance in any one of all those Arguments I have laid down, that either Mr. *Hutchinson*, or Mr. *D'Laun*, or any one else, have so much as attempted to shew the weakness and invalidity of, And sure all Men must needs conclude it is a strange

Confutation of Books when there is not any one Argument that is laid down from first to last, the invalidating or weakning of which has been so much as attempted. For Men to cry out of dictating, when they know in their Consciences that nothing is affirmed but what is proved, and that by such Arguments as they dare not undertake to answer, signifies but little. Surely I may do with such Confutations and Animadversions, as *Job* professes he would have done with any Book his Adversaries should have written against him, viz. *take them upon my Shoulder, and bind them as a Crown to me.*

And now, *Reverend and beloved Brethren*, Bear with me, though I take the boldness earnestly to intreat and beseech you, having laid aside all Anticipations and Prejudices, yea, all superfluity of naughtiness, yet once again seriously to receive, and in the fear of God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, throughly ponder the Arguments, that have been both by by others and my self (which in part are here again in Love, and I hope I may say in a Spirit of Meekness, presented to you) for your satisfaction, and chuse rather to become victorious Captives unto Truth, than to lie under the Charge of *holding fast Deceit, and refusing to return.* It is true, you have given us some account why you cannot receive that for Truth which we judge to be so; but I can hardly think (bear with my plainness) but upon a serious Review your selves must needs own it to be unsatisfactory. I doubt not but you have weighed again and again the Arguments pleaded by some
on

Est aliquid spectare Deos, & adesse putare. Ovid.

on the behalf of our Judgment and Practice, drawn from the Covenant : But let me say, Have not some Mistakes, which since have been discovered and rectified, occasioned your rejection of them? For my own part I must say, had not I evidently seen a way to rectify those Mistakes, if I had not been in your Tents, I should not have abode in your opposite's with any considerable satisfaction to my self. Had it been so indeed as some have thought, that the Covenant entred with *Abraham* had taken in all his Posterity, at least descending by *Isaac* and *Jacob*, during the First-Testament-Administration, meerly as such, I could not but have judged it a very rational Supposal, that that had been a Priviledg peculiar to himself, and not continued to all believing Parents ; or could I not have maintained the Covenant-Interest of the Infant-Seed of Believers, but by distinguishing of the Covenant as Internal and External, I see not how I could upon any solid Grounds have maintained it. Or did the Covenant only convey unto them External Priviledges, as the Ground upon which their Covenant-Interest and Baptism are pleaded upon, would have appeared to me less sure and firm ; so I should have somewhat hesitated whether the Advantages redounding to them, at least in respect of those that die in their Infancy, would countervail the Inconveniences of a Contest thereabout. Or had it been so that that grand Promise of the Covenant, wherein God promises to be a God to *Abraham* and his Seed, had (as simply and absolutely considered) included all Spiritual Good, and consequently that all that have an actual Interest in that Promise, must needs either *de presenti* actually have, or *de futuro* be infallibly assured

assured of saving Grace, I should have judged it at least very probable that the Covenant might be restrained to the Elect ; or yet could I not have allowed Infants, as such, any other Interest in the Covenant, than a visible standing under the outward Administration of it, I should have readily granted they had indeed no Interest at all in it, and consequently not to be baptized. But I am fully satisfied these things are meer Mistakes, it is quite otherwise. And hence not only that the Infant-Seed of Believers are in Covenant, but the Consistency of their being so with all those Orthodox Doctrines maintained both by you and us against the *Arminians*, with the very great Benefit and Advantage they have thereby, appears with so much plainness and evidence to me, that I can hardly forbear to wonder they should not do so to all others, who have attained to any Competency of Ability for the comparing one Scripture with another. And though I suppose some of you may say somewhat more to purpose, than any of those, who since these Mistakes have been rectified, and our Practice truly founded upon its right Basis, have appeared in favour of your Cause, have said : Yet let me say, I verily believe they will never be able to answer, either some of those Arguments Mr. *Baxter* has laid down for the Church-Membership of the Infant-Seed of Believers, or that I have offered for the establishing of their Covenant-Interest and Right to Baptism thereupon. So as that a tender Conscience residing in a Heart, *from whom God has not bid Understanding*, can quietly acquiesce therein. As for those two who have concerned themselves in my poor Endeavours to let in some further Light into this Controversy,

troverſy, let your Conſciences ſpeak out, Did you ever read ſuch inſignificant Animadverſions and Confutations, neither the one nor the other attempting in the leaſt to ſhew the Inſufficiency of any one Argument I have laid down? ſurely neither could the Authors: nor can you ſuppoſe that ſuch Diſcourſes can yeild any other Advantage to your Cauſe than this, viz. that although they ſignify nothing to thoſe that read them, yet will give riſe to a general Rumour that ſuch a Book is answered. And alas! how are they forced, that what they ſay may carry ſome appearance of a Reply to our Arguments, to ſeign us to uſe other Mediums, or to argue quite otherwiſe than indeed we do, and impoſe upon us ſuch Conceſſions as we are no way obliged to, but do expreſſly reject.

As to the former, in reſpect of which your ſelves are not wholly innocent, how evident is it both in that Suppoſal of Mr. *Hutchinſon*, juſtified by Mr. *D'Laun*, that the main Ground we lay or can lay, to the Church-Membership and Baptiſm of the Infant-Seed of Believers, is their Relation to *Abraham* as his Seed; and alſo that Suppoſal, that I argue from the Analogy Baptiſm bears with Circumciſion, which is apparently falſe, and is expreſſly diſowned by me. It is the Command to keep the Covenant that I argue from, and only mention Circumciſion to ſhew that by *Covenant* is there meant the Token of the Covenant.

As for the latter, take two Inſtances at preſent, Both Mr. *Hutchinſon* and Mr. *D'Laun* will needs ſuppoſe and ſeem to think, that we muſt grant that that Covenant entred with *Abraham*, Gen. 17. was the Old Covenant, ſaid by the Apoſtle to be vaniſhed away.

away. 2dly. That that Covenant did reach unto, and take in all *Abraham's* natural Posterity, meerly as such, during the First-Testament-Administrations. Both which things we absolutely deny.

And that excessive Wrong done to several worthy Antipædobaptists in wresting and perverting their Writings in favour of your Practice, is an effect of the same Cause.

Brethren, these things ought not to be so, neither (could the Asserters of your Practice give any rational Reply to our Arguments without the help of such Artifices) would they be so. Can you answer our Arguments? spare us not, but do not feign us to argue from such Topicks, and after such a manner as we do not. If any Antipædo-baptists have written any thing that really countenances your Cause, let their words be candidly produced, but wrest not their words, whose *Owners* *abhorred Union with your Assemblies*, to such a sense as they never intended, nor will their words justly bear. But Brethren, did the Supportation of your Judgment and Practice only enforce those that engage therein thus to deal with us, it might be more easily passed over. But alas! how do they injure even the Holy Ghost himself, partly by openly contradicting the expresse Letter of his holy *Oracles*. Thus to deny that God in that Promise *Gen. 17. 7.* intended *Abraham's* natural Childen, and in particular those that immediatly proceeded from his own Loins, as some do; or to affirm that that Covenant was the Covenant of Works, which Believers are now dead unto; or to deny the Continuation of that Promise to believing Gentiles, and that in the same extent in which it was given to *Abraham*,

as

as a believing Parent of natural Children: What is it but to say to the Holy Ghost, as they to the Prophet, *Thou speakest falsely?* Let that *Gen. 17. 7.* be compared with *Gal. 3. 14, 17, 29.* Partly by imposing upon his words such a sense as which himself hath nowhere else used them in, and that in a direct opposition to that sense he usually and frequently hath used them in; so in respect of that *Luk. 19. 9.* and *1 Cor. 7. 14.* Partly by charging him with such impertinent Probations of his Assertions, and Enforcements of his Exhortations, as Men of common Capacities are not ordinarily incident unto: thus in respect of that *Acts 16. 31.* *1 Cor. 7. 14.* Neither can the Covenant-Interest of the Infant-Seed of Believers be rejected without at least a seeming Reflection upon the Grace and Love of God, that he should utterly conceal from his People what becomes of their Infant-Seed, who are cropt off in the Bud, before they have arrived to a Capacity of refusing the Evil, and chusing the Good; as in case the Covenant secures not their future state (which in case it reaches them not, it cannot do) he has undoubtedly done.

As to that Supposition, that the Covenant is made with the Elect, it is a meer Mistake, as I conceive may be undeniably demonstrated from those Reasons among others that Mr. D'Laun offers to prove that Infants cannot be concerned in it. And if you shall say, *As for our own parts we deny not their Covenant-Interest, it is their Baptism we deny.*

Let me say, Brethren, It would be the Joy of our Hearts to understand that it were so indeed. But pray deal plainly, let not your Auditors and Followers

lowers be kept in the dark, either expressely own and assert it, or expressely deny it: And if you do indeed own it, let these Arguments, offered to prove the Rightfulness of their Baptism upon that Supposition, be thoroughly weighed; the Addition of more, till the Insufficiency of those he shewed, is unnecessary, *Propter se per plura.*

And there is yet one thing more that I would remind you of, though thereby I am forced *renuere dolorem*; for I am perswaded you do observe it, and the observation of it is a vexation to your righteous Souls; I mean the variety of Errours, yea, and Heresy, found (I fear it may be said without an *Hyperbole*) with the Generality of those who as to this Practice walk in the same steps with you; yet I shall rather refer you to your own observation, and such as you can credit, and in part clear Mr. F. than become your Informant my self. But sure you can conclude no less than that either too many of your Perswasion are, if not Men of corrupt Minds, yet but Children, and subject to be tossed to and fro by every wind of Doctrine, or else that Divine Displeasure antedates the Judgment of the great Day, invisibly recompensing Deceit with Vanity. Either of which, especially the latter, supposing they must, as (to speak plainly) I am much perswaded they ought to be ascribed thereunto, calls aloud, as to all Men, not to enter into your Paths, seeing what befalls others may befall them, without great Deliberation, Prayer, and utmost Search of the Scriptures, and yet at last supposing them to be satisfied that that is the way they should walk in, to do it with a holy fear and trembling, so that you do receive your Grounds again and again, and be sure
you

you can satisfy your Consciences in your persistency therein, before him who will judge without *respect of Persons*. Seeing then they are in part chargeable upon you, your owning and defending that Opinion and Practice, thus visibly pursued with Divine Punishments and Judgments, having no small Interest in the prevailing thereof among Men, and *Causa Cause*, &c.

Brethren, There are several other things I could willingly have said to you; but these things I judge necessary to set before you, partly as matter of Lamentation, and partly as Motives, yet once again with all seriousness to review this Controversy so long depending between us. And remember, that not only your selves, but God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, his Church and People, with the Souls of not a few Infants, especially of such whose Months are limited to Immaturity of Age, are nearly concerned in the Review you make, and the Resolutions you thereupon fix in. As for our Judgment and Practice, this *Quietes vivit adhuc, Christus manet insuperabile verum*. As for you, in reviewing this Controversy, and fixing your Resolutions thereupon, let me beseech you to keep in mind what your selves perfectly know, *viz.* That Conscience is *Res delicata*, it cannot lie with ease as *Job's Leviathan* can, when sharp-pointed things are strewn under it; and besides it may, and often does, record such things as at present it does not sensibly discover any offence at.

I shall add no more, save only to beg your Pardon for my plainness, and commend you to God, and the

the Word of his Grace, in special that good Word uttered by our Lord Christ himself in that *John 16. 13.* and assure you, I am sincerely yours, to serve you in all Offices of Christian Love to my power.

JOSEPH WHISTON.

F I N I S.

READER,

THe Author hath treated more largely on this Subject in three Books, entituled,

I. Infant-Baptism from Heaven, and not of Men. The first Part.

II. Infant-Baptism from Heaven, and not of Men; the second Part; being an Answer to Mr. *Dawyer's* Treatise of Baptism.

III. An Essay to revive the Primitive Doctrine of Infant-Baptism, in the Resolution of four Questions.

1. What are the Reasons of God's appointing the Token of the Covenant to be applied to the Infant-Seed of his People?

2. What is the Good or Benefit they receive thereby?

3. What is the Duty of Parents towards their Children, as bearing the Token of the Covenant?

4. What is the Improvement that Children, as grown up to years of maturity, may and ought to make of their Baptism?

All three sold by *Jonathan Robinson*, at the Golden Lion in St. Paul's Church-Yard.

